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AMONG OUR CONTRIBUTORS

JEAN BLOCH-MICHEL, our Paris correspondent, is a French journalist, novelist, and critic.

DAVID BENSMAN is a graduate student in history at Columbia University.

DAVID BROMWICH, an undergraduate at Yale University, has frequently written for us on the movies.

PRAN CHOPRA, our New Delhi correspondent, an Indian journalist and former editor of the *Calcutta Statesman,* served as radio commentator and war correspondent in the recent Indo-Pakistani war.

MELVIN DRIMMER, chairman of the Department of History at Spelman College in Atlanta, is the author of *Black History: A Reappraisal* (1968).

JOHN H. GAGNON is a professor of sociology and director of the Center for Continuing Education at the State University of New York at Stony Brook. He is co-author, with William Simon, of *Sex-Offenders* (1965), *Sexual Deviants* (1967), and of *The Sexual Scene,* to be published this year by Aldine.

ALEX NACHT, a graduate student at Princeton University, is completing a doctorate in sociology.

JESSE PITTS, a professor of sociology at Oakland University, has written for us on the hippie movement (1969) and on the counter culture (1971). He now is preparing a book on these subjects, and he is also engaged in research on "murder and its penalties."

NISSIM REJWAN, our Jerusalem correspondent, is an Israeli free-lance writer and a senior research fellow at the Shiloah Middle East Center in Tel Aviv.

GAYE TOUCHMAN is an assistant professor of sociology at the State University of New York at Stony Brook. She is doing research on mass communications and, in addition, is studying the sociology of sex roles.

HAIM BARKAI is a professor of economics at Hebrew University and associated with the Falk Institute in Jerusalem. A slightly different version of his article appears in *Israel, the Arabs, and the Middle East,* Irving Howe and Carl Gershman editors, copyright © 1972 by Bantam Books and published this spring by Bantam (paper) and Quadrangle (cloth). It appears with the publishers' permission.

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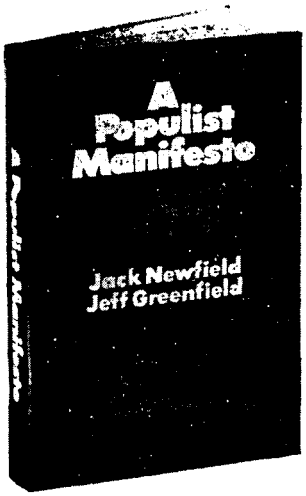

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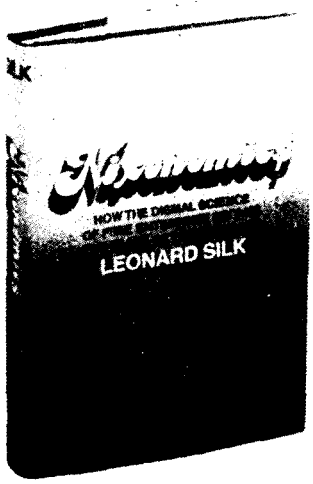

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Michael Walzer

Notes for Whoever's Left

Perhaps it is presumptuous for those of us who were often sharply critical of the New Left to address ourselves now to its scattered and disorganized followers. Yet among them are future friends and allies—who have begun to make criticisms of their own—and it is important that we find a way to talk together, sooner rather than later. The last years of sectarian in-fighting, ideological debauch, and pseudorevolutionary violence have taken a heavy toll, not only among New Left militants. There are signs today of a massive withdrawal from political involvement, a spreading mood of cynicism about the possibilities of political success. It is clear that any sort of sustained leftist activity is going to be extremely difficult. *In the New Left fall/ We suffered all.*

"The political scene has seldom looked more dreary"—so Christopher Lasch wrote last October in a *New York Review of Books* piece, "Can the Left Rise Again?" His is probably the best statement on the present condition of the American Left, and I shall use it as a guide, even while marking off some areas of disagreement. Half a year after he wrote, things look more dreary still. There has been no significant activity at all, nothing but a few ritual efforts by leftover cadres unable to command any serious response from the ranks. One has the uneasy sense that as an organized force the New Left of the '60s has simply disappeared, leaving behind a small number of embittered terrorists and a few isolated and impotent sects.

That is certainly wrong, for leftish opinions of a more or less "new" sort are widely believed today, and even fashionable. I still meet people of all kinds (and in surprising places) whose views are "far to the Left" of those commonly found in DISSENT. But I don't meet them, nor does anyone else, at meetings or demonstrations. It's probably not unfair to say of most of them that their opinions are all that is left of their leftism. So far as organization and activity go, they have been radically disillusioned by the ugliness of the last few years, chastened by failure—even when it wasn't their own. They have lost any sense of what ought to be done and any willingness to do it. Well, so have we all been chastened, and no one at this moment has a clear program. When the revolution doesn't happen, it's not easy to find one's way back to everyday politics. Some people—leftist dropouts—simply won't find their way. And the result is a downward spiral of frustration and retreat that gets wider and faster because reentry into the mainstream of American life, or into its cultural margins, is much easier than a leftist reorganization. A few radicals are left stranded on peaks of militancy, easy victims for the authorities, while life on the plain returns all too quickly to "normality."

Again, that is not an accurate picture: American life has changed a great deal during the past decade, and much of the change is the achievement of the Left, in some broad sense of that term. What is crucial and disastrous, however, is that the Left has had no *victories*. A victory is an achievement that gets credited to somebody, that some movement or party claims as its own, on the basis of which it advertises itself, recruits new members, even seeks a share of political power. In politics, nothing is more important than win-

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ning victories, and the Left has not won any. Yet look what has happened: the country has been turned around on the Vietnam war (though the war has not yet been ended); the position of black people in America has been radically transformed (though we are still far from racial justice). In both cases, the peace movement and the civil rights movement had a share in doing what got done. In both cases, these movements played a leading part in the political mobilization of masses of men and women. But these movements spurned the (admittedly incomplete) victories that could have been had, and as a result they were not able to establish an independent or stable presence in American life.

Here I want to suggest a disagreement with Lasch, which may have implications for the future. He argues that the turn toward a more militant politics in the middle and late '60s occurred because of the failure of "polite reformism"—"the failure of the peace movement to end the cold war or to prevent Vietnam, the failure of the civil rights movement to achieve racial justice, the failure of reform Democrats to reform the Democratic Party." It seems to me that in at least two of these areas—the war and the fight for the Democratic party (I'll have something to say about civil rights later) —the critical struggles came *after* the New Left had turned to an ultraradicalism that made its effective participation dubious or impossible. It's not that "we" (the "polite reformers") failed and "they" became radical, but that "they" became radical and then "we" failed. On the other hand, it has to be admitted that such liberal-left efforts as the McCarthy campaign were organized at least partly in response to pressure from the far Left (though also in response to the widespread demand for an alternative to the compulsions of far Left politics). Nor do I want to underestimate the sense of urgency and despair that drove thousands of young Americans steadily leftward. Their politics was not merely willful, though one wishes they had sensed the limits beyond which it became dangerous (to others as well as to themselves).

Throughout the '60s, as Lasch admits, there existed a symbiotic relation between liberals and radicals. We rose and fell together—1968 was a crucial year for both of us—and there are lessons in that fact that I will try to draw out later on. For the moment, we all must live with our failure to understand and profit from that relation and to take what might have been had. And we must be frank about the extent of the failure, for it has to do not only with what happened or didn't happen in the '60s, but with our future prospects. Ten years of militancy and upheaval have left virtually no institutional residue: no ongoing organizations, no coherent or nationally recognized cadres of leaders and spokesmen, no respected New Left journals, no public network to keep radicals in touch, no established or prototypical way to be *and keep on being* a radical.

Against this, it might be said that the counter culture represents the real success of the New Left—and it requires nothing more from the liberal world than tolerance. What is involved, or so we have been told, is an irreversible transformation in the consciousness of the young. If that were true, the New Left would be a force to reckon with, and in the very near future. But it is far from true. Whatever value and impetus the counter culture once had derived from the political movements with which, however tenuously, it was associated. Deprived of that connection, it is literally valueless, with no substantive political or moral content, with decreasing power to attract the young, and readily susceptible, as we have begun to see, to an almost infinite debasement. "Desperate and bitter, brutalized by drugs and police," writes Lasch, "the youth culture sinks into the underworld and [its participants] become increasingly indistinguishable from the lumpenproletariat." A harsh judgment, but probably accurate. Nor are other forms of fashionable leftism likely to prove any more sustaining. A powerful political movement can create a culture-on-the-side, where distinct styles of writing, singing, dressing, and above all of talking are cultivated—as the Communist party did during the days of the Popular Front. Such a movement may even feed on the participants in this culture. But it cannot live on them.

Vietnam

A comment on the Nixon proposals for ending the Vietnam war will be found in Joseph Buttinger's comprehensive study of American involvement in Vietnam. (See page 440.)

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There is no substitute for the commitment and discipline bred by significant action.

II

WHAT MADE THE '60s EXCITING, what made its (limited) achievements possible, was the fact that different groups on the Left shared a sense of what needed to be done. Issues that had been avoided for a long time suddenly seemed unavoidable, and despite important tactical and strategic disagreements, a number of specific activities won large-scale support. Efforts to explain these activities in ideological terms or to fit them into a world-historical framework, however, did not work: no position won wide acceptance or proved even minimally persuasive. Not that people didn't try to persuade or to be persuaded. But the political forces set in motion in the '60s were extraordinarily diverse, with different histories, class compositions, political styles and goals, and it was never likely that a single or unified explanation would account for all of them or establish guidelines for their cooperation. Today, the common commitment to issues also has disappeared. We live with a new uncertainty, intellectually refreshing after all the "correct ideological positions" that have been inflicted upon us, but also politically ennervating. I want to try to suggest some of the reasons for the uncertainty and some ways of living with it, without pretending that my suggestions have any authoritative basis in personal or collective experience. DISSENT has not triumphed either; nor are any of its editors writing manifestos just now. It would be a great mistake, nevertheless, not to try to draw lessons from the recent past or to specify, however tentatively, some ongoing difficulties.

1. At the center of uncertainty is the problem of relations with the liberal world. I don't mean, the liberal establishment, whatever that is, but more simply, liberal politicians and their present constituencies, from whom leftists have grown increasingly estranged (not without reason). Historically, the Left has stood in a complicated double relation to the liberal world. To put it crudely, we have said, first, that we want something more than and, second, that we want something different from what it offers. The first demand has been absolutely crucial to the success of the liberals themselves: in the '30s and again in the mid-'60s, significant social reform has come when there was organized pressure from the Left—or at least, pressure (from workers and blacks) in the organization of which leftists played a major part. The '70s will not be different; liberalism is, if anything, less self-sufficient than ever before. It will be one of the tasks of militants trained during the past decade to build pressure on liberal politicians in the name of immediate and limited programs. I have in mind the sort of thing suggested some months ago in a DISSENT article appropriately titled "What Do We Want Now?" (Irving Howe, December 1971). The trouble is that many liberals don't want anything right now, except peace and quiet. We suffer from their weakness, as they will suffer from ours.

The second demand has to do with the identity of the Left itself. I will have more to say

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William Kunstler: Amnesia and the Judas Goat

"Violence never was the alternative in the movement," William Kunstler responded. "That was merely the paranoia of the public and the press. The press built it up. But we've succeeded in quelling the paranoia. . . ."
"I myself don't think the public really believes any more that violence ever was the movement's aim, although they probably used to," Mr. Kunstler said. "All the great acquittals we have had—victory after victory in court, and not a single Black Panther convicted, for example—is showing the people that the fear of violence was just hysteria."

"Kunstler Agrees Left Is Less Militant," by Ben Franklin, New York Times, *February 21, 1972* □

"You must learn to fight in the streets, learn to revolt, learn to shoot guns. We will learn to do all the things the property owners fear," said William Kunstler.
"Right on!" a dozen youths cried, "Right on!"
"You may have to take that final step," Kunstler said. "You may ultimately be bathed in blood. So will others."

"Kunstler: Blood! Kids: Right On!" by Jay Levin, New York Post, *May 12, 1970* □

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about that later; now I only want to point out how the search for an independent identity has time and again led leftist parties and sects to turn liberals into their "chief enemy," and to deny that there is any continuity at all between liberal success and radical aspiration. That there are important discontinuities between the two cannot be doubted. Nevertheless, liberals and leftists appeal to the same groups of people and share many of the same concerns—for liberty, above all. The two groups can go and have to go a long way together, whatever the tensions that arise in the course of their cooperation. Under present and foreseeable conditions, it just can't be the case that liberals are the chief enemies of the Left. If we are vital to their success, they are vital to ours. The liberal world is still the only possible base for leftist activity. And the only organizations through which we can hope to win victories are liberal-left coalitions, such as the civil rights and peace movements were before they fell apart. What happened after they fell apart suggests dramatically enough that we are not ready for the "pleasures" of going it alone.

2. The most painful moment in the history of the '60s came when white liberals and radicals were expelled from the civil rights movement. It's not difficult to understand the motives of the black militants who seized control at that time and turned the movement into something very different from what it had been. Nor is it difficult to sympathize with some of those motives. The immediate result, however, was disastrous for the Left—not only politically, but intellectually and morally. The last few years have seen a succession of racial and then ethnic self-assertions with which radicals have been utterly unable to come to grips in any serious way. The prevailing tendency (among many liberals too) has been to grant a kind of *carte blanche* to any "oppressed" group whose militants adopt a radical rhetoric, as if there were no principles by which their particular demands might be judged. Indeed, there are principles having to do with equality, mutuality, political responsibility, and radicals should never have hesitated to apply them. But the principles that relate specifically to racial cooperation are newly in doubt. Until the mid-'60s the Left was, at least programmatically, an integrated movement, and its goal was an integrated society. There were few things about which we were more certain than those two; we readily made judgments in the terms they set. Today the Left, or whatever is left of it, is deeply divided along racial and ethnic lines, and the desirable future balance of integration and separatism is painfully unclear, at least to me. No one that I know of has a compelling vision.

The Left is face-to-face with pluralism—a notion savagely repudiated only a few years ago. But when we seriously begin to discuss its possible forms, we shall have to admit, I think, that the complete abandonment of integration by many black militants, and then by whites in their tow, was terribly wrong-headed. Some balance there has to be, between the larger society in whose running we must all share equally, and those smaller societies where we cultivate our differences. The larger society, if it is ever to come into existence, still requires an integrated movement. As for the smaller societies, the Left has not yet faced the fact that there will be many of them. It's not only a question of blacks and Chicanos, but of Polish Americans and Irish, Chinese, Jews, perhaps even WASPs—all caught up in a small-group nationalism, sometimes attractive, sometimes not, toward which the Left has no comprehensible position. In trying to understand what is going on, we might begin by giving up the word "racist"—at least until we have thought again about what its opposite is and what we are.

3. Participatory democracy has not, to put it mildly, lived up to the expectations raised by its spokesmen. On this point, Lasch writes with especial force, and I have little to add to what he says. The question, again, is one of balance: between the need for local autonomy and participation and the need for unity and leadership at the center, where local members can't be present and have to be represented. Obviously, a balance of this sort existed even in SDS, which made such a fetish of primitive democracy, but few would say today that it was the right balance. Decisions of enormous importance were in fact taken on the initiative of relatively small groups of leaders, but not in such a way that these leaders were easily identified or, more important, held responsible for what they did. Partly for this reason, the organizational structures of the New Left were

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always shapeless and weak, until the sects, in response to this weakness, reverted decisively and foolishly to the Bolshevik style of democratic centralism. But sectarian discipline is as inappropriate to any political movement that hopes to be democratic as is New Left amorphousness. We need a new organizational strategy (or strategies), and this is not likely to be developed in isolation from some sort of renewed activity. I would argue only for a representative and responsible leadership, whatever the precise structures over which it presides. For the moment, of course, leadership is not the problem. Organizational needs are very limited: an open forum, above all, a place to regroup.

4. In the '60s the Left experimented with a variety of constituencies: the black and white poor, the working class, the new working class, middle-class students, the middle class itself. What were the results? I don't want to sound like the old man who commented bitterly about sex: "It's been tried with a man and a woman, and a man and a man, and a woman and a woman, and a man and two women, and a woman and two men—and it's never quite satisfactory." But the truth is that none of these constituencies was by itself quite satisfactory. Though each new social base was justified in elaborate ideological terms, none of them turned out to be the true and only social base. And today the Left seems baseless, without established roots in any particular community. Across the country, there is no clear social direction.

Nor are there likely to be, it seems to me, in the near future. Left politics is certain to be on a fairly small scale, and we must seek support where we can find it, *wherever* we can find it, without ideological presuppositions. My own sense, as I have already indicated, is that the place the Left is most likely to find support is among liberals—old-time civil rights and peace activists, mostly middle-class, and middle and lower-level people in trade union and black organizations. That means—where it has always been found. But it is also certain that much support must continue to come from students, even if the immediate impact of political disillusion is most sharply felt on the campus (where political fantasy was most free and extravagant a few years ago). And we may be able to make peace with at least some of the ethnic militants, though not on just any terms. Before that, we need to make a little peace among ourselves. Tolerance and openness are the key.

As We Live and Breathe . . .

A major purge has taken place among the leadership of the Chinese Communist party, as a result of the recent rightward shift in Chinese policy.

Without identifying Lin Piao by name, but in contexts where the association is clear, official Chinese sources have variously attacked "leftwing deviationists" and "people who are trying to undermine the unity of the party and the army, and the army and the government, and are opposing themselves to the party line," and also persons "who are having illegal relations with foreign countries," a clear implication of treason—presumably in connection with the Soviet Union. Among the issues acknowledged to be dividing the party are China's recent opposition to the self-determination of Bangladesh and support for the bloody anti-Communist repression in the Sudan. . . .

The leadership struggle over these issues is in a sense a continuation of the struggle which took place in the vortex of the Cultural Revolution, whose most significant victim was Liu Shao-chi. Until his fall, Liu had been the President of China, the acting chief of the party hierarchy, and one of the idolized leaders of the revolution.

A characteristic and significant aspect of Liu's fall, which is apparently repeating itself in the case of Lin, was that he was never permitted to articulate his political defense. To this day, we do not know what Liu Shao-chi advocated as an alternative political program for China, and neither do the Chinese people. . . .

When the ruling party in a single-party state permits itself no organized factions, and no organized dissent from its official line, the inevitable differences that arise, both tactical and strategic, become congealed in the personalities of the inner leadership. As a result, the political struggle tends to become a struggle between leaders for the power to control the official line.

While there can be no legitimate appeal to the rank and file, it often becomes necessary to eliminate the spokesman for a dissenting line with powerful potential rank-and-file support. This can be accomplished by character assassination, as in the Cultural Revolution, which completely distorted Liu's historical role (just as Stalin distorted Trotsky's) or by assassination pure and simple. . . .

Ramparts, March 1972 □

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III

I HAVE WAITED until the last to say anything about socialism. For me, and for many of those radicals who continue to think of themselves as political activists, socialism remains the directing vision of the future. And it is still our hope that the modest projects presently available to us can somehow move us closer to that goal. Lasch argues forcefully that the special effort of the Left *right now* should be to make contact with people where they work and to relate our politics to their work (and to our own). He is elaborating on an old socialist theme and describing what would certainly be a central feature of the activity of an autonomous socialist movement. To bring together politics and work, that is, to set a democratically run economy alongside a democratically run state —here is the core of socialist aspiration. It is important to remind ourselves of that, and to remind others.

But socialism is not, unhappily, an immediate political issue in the United States today. Lasch calls for a "fusion of community politics and trade union politics" as the only way of making it an issue in the near future. That is an attractive idea, but I am hard-pressed to understand what sorts of activity may lead to or represent such a fusion. Lasch's argument that it is already represented by the student movement, since students are organized where they work, seems to me radically unconvincing. In the first place, students don't work, that is, don't earn a living, which makes a great deal of difference. The discipline of the university is not at all like that of the economy: students are not an oppressed class (few of them could ever have believed that, nor does Lasch), and if many of them are apprentice technicians and professionals, it has to be said that their apprenticeship is more like a moratorium on, than an initiation into, routine economic activity. And second, students were organized successfully only against the war. Syndicalist efforts to win control of the university "workplace" ran a very poor second. Nor was their quality encouraging for the future of socialist fusion. Right now, "self-management," the socialism of adults, is an end without a visible means. Our most important work is still theoretical.

Our practical work will focus differently, for we are in no position to choose our causes with reference only to our ideology. We shall be involved in difficult battles over civil liberties, unionization, civil rights, social welfare, ethnic pluralism, crime, housing, education—and, endlessly, foreign policy. In all these battles, we can bring socialist perspectives to bear; we have an ethic, a literature, a history to draw upon. But we have no easy answers to the hard choices that we, and others, will face. Let me give just one example: when Chinese parents in San Francisco oppose school busing in the name of the cultural autonomy of their community, what is the right socialist or radical response? I know where we stand on the question of who should run the factories, but here I am uncertain. Nor do I see any easy move from one choice or the other to a socialist politics. We still have to look forward to the time when our vision actually integrates our day-to-day activity. Right now, it only draws us together—hopefully—to talk about and plan for that time. □

New Editors

We are pleased to announce two additions to our Editorial Board:

PATRICIA CAYO SEXTON, who has been a Detroit auto worker, UAW chief steward at the Dodge Main Plant, and radio commentator for UAW national hookup programs. She now is a professor of sociology and education at New York University. Among her books are *Spanish Harlem: An Anatomy of Poverty* (1965), *The Feminized Male: Classrooms, White Collars, and the Decline of Manliness* (1969), and *School Policy and Issues in a Changing Society* (1971).

BRENDAN SEXTON, a veteran trade unionist who recently retired from his post as educational director of the United Automobile Workers' Union. He participated as an organizer in the formation of the CIO, and for many years worked closely with the Reuther and Woodcock leadership in the UAW. He now is a professor of metropolitan studies at New York University.

The Sextons co-authored *Blue Collars and Hard Hats: The Working Class and the Future of American Politics,* published this year by Random House.

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Pran Chopra

Asia after Bangladesh

NEW DELHI

Despite its brevity, the 14-day war between India and Pakistan marks a major diplomatic watershed, and despite the localization of the combat it will strongly influence the future of southern Asia and relations between the United States, the Soviet Union, and China. Pakistan may have forced the war upon India, with the preemptive air strike on December 3, for the limited purpose of preventing an Indian attack on East Pakistan; India may have launched the war, on December 4, for creating conditions in which the refugees would go back to their homes in East Bengal. But their actions will have much larger consequences. This war was the product of several factors transcending the hostility between India and Pakistan; it will bring in its train much larger events than the emergence of a new nation of 75 million people or the repatriation of 10 million refugees.

The fluid relations between the world's three biggest powers could be more violently upset by what happens between India and Pakistan than by the war in the Middle East or that in Vietnam. Besides deeply involving the United States, the web of mutual obligations surrounding India and Pakistan—which are very real whether or not embodied in formal treaties such as the Indo-Soviet and the U.S.-Pakistani treaties—have built a continuous politico-military frontier, the world's longest, out of the borders between Russia and China, China and India, and India and Pakistan. Geography has spared the Middle East and Vietnam this awesome burden.

China had only a limited involvement in the Middle East, just as it had in the cold war between the two halves of Europe. The Soviet Union and the United States are deeply involved, but lacking the necessary mass and physical contiguity with either of them, neither the Arabs nor Israel can tilt the balance between the two superpowers. Vietnam has contiguity with China, but while it draws China and Russia into mutual competition it does not expose them to a mutual armed conflict.

NOW LOOK at India and Pakistan. There is an enormous population as well as close physical contiguity with Russia and China. The U.S. is physically far but has very high stakes in the rivalry between the U.S.S.R. and China. Therefore:

- the U.S. is not only liable to be sucked into an Indo-Pakistani conflict, and was so psychologically in December via the Seventh Fleet;
- the U.S. has not only been a prime factor in Indo-Pakistani conflicts in the past—
- but as long as Sino-Soviet hostility persists and the U.S. is willing to take a hand in that, an Indo-Pakistani war can be for it, too, as well as for Russia and China, the beginning of a global earthquake. This makes the borders between India and Pakistan one of the great new epicenters of the world.

Therefore it is important for the world to note the subtle change that has taken place in India as a factor in the world's diplomacy. India's traditional nonalignment was a reaction to the cold war in the old bipolar world. Her bialignment with the United States and the Soviet Union came when China took a hefty

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bash at India in order to knock the world into a triangular shape. Since then India has been reacting to the growing hostility between Russia and China, the growing detente between America and China, and the continued hostility of China, of which the Sino-Pakistani axis is only one aspect. But there is a difference now: India is also trying to influence world events instead of only reacting to them. The 14-day war with Pakistan marks the advent of the difference; its consequences will enlarge the change.

China, by its implacable hostility to Russia, has speeded up a number of geopolitical changes in the world. They might have taken place anyway, but not so fast. Not only has China converted bipolar diplomacy into a triangular diplomacy; by promoting Russia to enemy number one, it has also transformed Russo-American rivalry to its own advantage. China emerged as a challenge to Russia just when the Soviet Union was closing in upon the U.S. In this situation, with the United States anxious to preserve its leading position and China more than willing to impede Russia in the hope of improving its own position, it was natural that the United States and China should discover an affinity. This simple arithmetic of power, which is as strong a motive in the behavior of nations as in that of individuals, is as good an explanation of the developing global picture as the Sino-Soviet ideological tussle or Nixon's ambition to win a few diplomatic laurels before the next presidential election.

For reasons explained in the opening paragraphs, the implications of the changes in the global picture were bound to be seen more in the Indian subcontinent than anywhere else. It is here that Russian, American, and Chinese diplomacies most overlap and mutual trade-offs can take place.

Through most of the 1960s there was a tacit understanding between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. on four points about the Indo-Pakistani subcontinent:

- the two powers shared interests here that were more complementary than competitive;
- these interests could be better served, for both powers, by promoting stability in the region than through conflict;
- in the interests of this stability they could permit India to be a major power in the region though not the predominant one, and Pakistan could be encouraged as a countervailing power against India;
- the guiding hand for ensuring these arrangements could be more that of the Soviet Union than of the United States, the region being more important to Moscow because of its problems with Peking.

This was the geopolitics of the Tashkent conference, which America watched from a distance with sympathy. It inaugurated Russia's policy of putting India and Pakistan in the harness of a regional tandem, in which the United States also saw some chance of stability.

BUT THIS understanding was wholly eroded by the Sino-Soviet hostility and by Nixon's urge to manipulate it to the advantage of America. As the U.S. Vice-President in the mid-1950s, Nixon had grown up in world politics when the cold war was at its height; he had also been very prominent in getting Pakistan into Seato and Cento. These two passions of his younger days would have invaded his world view in later life as well, but perhaps not so suddenly or deeply if China had not offered them the opening it did. China became a much better weapon for the containment of Russia than any John Foster Dulles could have thought of. Nixon hugged this opportunity wholeheartedly, with Kissinger giving sophistication to Nixon's gut reactions, and China's relations with Pakistan giving added satisfaction.

This gave India cause for serious concern, and less because of what China and America might do between them to Russia than because of the chance China would get to reorder southern Asia according to its desire. It remains to be seen whether China will succeed more than Russia did in getting Hanoi to concede a Vietnam settlement acceptable to Nixon. But China will certainly demand a high price for making the effort, and so great is Nixon's investment in his new China policy that he will probably concede to China a much higher say in the affairs of southern Asia than Johnson conceded to Russia. Thus Nixon will come closer than he can in any other way to the two main objectives of his Asian and world policy: to find a way out of Vietnam and to help China become as tight a noose for the

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Russians as it possibly can be. If in the process China also became a noose for the Indians, that would not worry him too much. As American interests would recede in southern Asia, the space would be filled by Chinese interests, not by the less preferable ones of India or Russia. The gainer on the subcontinent would be an old friend, Pakistan. At the time of Nixon's ascent to the White House, India appeared to be in such a mess altogether that it encouraged no one to invest any strategic hopes in her; only Nixon probably wrote off India with more satisfaction than regret.

China's complementary antagonisms toward the Soviet Union and India could lead to only one objective: to play off Pakistan to the maximum advantage against India, to squash any dream India may have of carving out a regional place for herself under Russian auspices, and thus to make the whole of South and Southeast Asia a Chinese preserve while eliminating the foothold Russia was acquiring through its influence in India. To this, Nixon could have had no objection.

But Nixon was counting without Mrs. Gandhi and her willingness to take the risk of giving history a push. Ever since she consolidated her domestic position, perceptive Indians had been confident that she would take the first chance she could to consolidate her foreign-policy position too. Thanks to Nixon and the uprising in East Bengal the chance came sooner than expected. It came in the midst of what could have been India's most desperate crisis since the partition 25 years ago. But the finesse and cool courage of her leadership converted the crisis into India's most startling achievement since independence was won. Her answer to Nixon was the Indo-Soviet treaty, signed within four weeks of Kissinger's visit to Peking and announced with the same dramatic suddenness. Her answer to China was what followed the Treaty.

Russia had been urging such a treaty for two years at least, but India consented only when Nixon's diplomacy made this precaution against Chinese ambitions essential. It was at India's insistence that the Treaty was so worded as to commit the Soviety Union to giving immediate and effective assistance if, for any reason whatsoever, China or Pakistan would threaten India. It is possible that with the Indo-Pakistani tension mounting every day as the refugees poured in from Bangladesh, Russia would have preferred a looser commitment. But India's interests demanded a commitment that would be firm enough to deter China, and she succeeded in writing it into the Treaty. That done, Mrs. Gandhi turned to the Pakistan crisis.

The Soviet Union, convinced though it was that its investments in Pakistan had gone to waste, was loath to give up its former game of trying to carry Pakistan along with India; till the 11th hour it remained committed to the unity of Pakistan. That is why it advised India to rule out the use of force. But India decided to give events a new direction, because she knew that her stakes were immense. If she allowed Pakistan to get away with what it had done, the whole of Asia would know that India had been made powerless by the fear of Pakistan's ally, China. If she forced Pakistan to take the refugees back or else to face a war and dismemberment, then not only would India's economy and her political and social system be spared the risk of collapse under the burden of the refugees, but Pakistan would be eliminated as a countervailing factor, India's role in southern Asia would grow at China's expense, and she would be taken more seriously by China.

India pressed upon Russia the very persuasive argument that it was in Russia's own interests in southern Asia to show up China as merely a paper tiger. Using to good advantage the division between hawks and doves that exists in Moscow as in all capitals—Kosygin seems a dove in this respect, Brezhnev a hawk—India committed Russia, in the joint statement issued at the end of Mrs. Gandhi's Moscow visit after the Treaty, to a clear recognition of India's right to take any steps that may be needed for getting the refugees back into East Bengal. When the fighting broke out, as it was bound to, India set the strategy completely in her own unaided judgment. She hastened recognition of Bangladesh to present the U.N. with a *fait accompli*. Despite the arrival of the American fleet in the Indian Ocean, India insisted on and obtained the unconditional surrender of the large army of West Pakistan in East Bengal. The terms and timing of the cease-fire in the west were also decided by India herself, whatever President Nixon may say to please West Pakistan.

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But what will follow next? If China in its own interests encouraged Pakistan to risk a war, as the Pakistani air strike on December 3 suggests (or if, as Pakistan suspects, Russia in its own interests encouraged India to risk a war), then will China let Russia and India get away with the dismemberment of Pakistan? The balance of power in southern Asia is at stake, not only the future of Pakistan—and more than the balance of southern Asia. If China seeks to undo recent events, directly or through the backing of Pakistan, Russia will face the same quandary as China faces today: it must live up to its treaty commitments to India or else be shown up as a paper tiger. If China redeems its pledges to Pakistan and Russia its pledges to India, can the United States stay out of the conflict? This subterranean linkage has yet to be explored between Indo-Pakistani tensions and the peace of the world. Although Pakistan's defeat has been accepted by China, this does not mean that it has been accepted for all time.

If West Pakistan does not collapse under the weight of internal dissentions—and that cannot be ruled out—China and the United States will try to prop it up after this winter so that it may continue a harassing conflict with India and thus keep the options open for a more decisive intervention later on. In other words, West Pakistan will be cast in the holding role in which the four West Pakistani divisions in East Pakistan were cast until they collapsed in the middle of December. China and the U.S. could not do very much in the present conflict because events moved too fast for the United States, and China was blocked off by snow in the Himalayan passes. But if West Pakistan can work up a chance for them, they will try to nip in the bud the position India will otherwise acquire in southern Asia.

With or without this further test, India will have to face one further problem to succeed finally in throwing back the Chinese ambition of unquestioned supremacy in southern Asia: will India be content to remain a junior partner in a treaty alliance with the Soviet Union? By her intentions, at least, the answer is NO. But whether events will support her intentions depends on the United States. If India becomes an independent power in southern Asia, she will revive on a higher plane the role of nonalignment she played during the 1950s on a lower plane. Rather than become the ally of one side in a world that is reverting to bipolarity, she would like to be in a concert of middle powers which are independent vis-à-vis this new bipolarity. She can be checkmated in this by China alone, and even by China only if the U.S. encourages it. Just as Pakistan will not harass India again unless China prompts it to do so, China will do the prompting only if the U.S. gives assured backing against a Russian response. This places the option in the hands of Nixon to decide whether India will be a power in southern Asia under Russian auspices and as a Russian front—or as an independent link in a chain of similarly independent middle powers around the globe. India's emergence as a southern Asian power can be more or less taken as certain now, because in combination with Russia she is stronger in this region than any available opposing combination. It is the nature of the role she will be able to play which continues to be open to speculation, and the answer lies more with the U.S. President than with anyone else. □

Nissim Rejwan

Discord in Israel

JERUSALEM

Originally I had planned to devote this Letter to the internal situation in Israel—the socio-economic gap and the Black Panthers, signs of corruption in high places, the New Class, and other strains facing a fundamentally egalitarian society that finds it increasingly difficult to reconcile theory and practice. But upon coming back to Israel toward the end of January after a short stay abroad, I found the country "up to its neck" in ideology. The 28th Zionist Congress, after ten days of deliberations and a few scenes of pandemonium, concluded its sessions in January with a resolution requiring Zionists outside Israel to "fulfill their Zionism" by immigration and making it incumbent on them "to impart to their children Jewish and Zionist education"—or else resign from any office in the Zionist movement.

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A few days earlier, the well-known Tunisian-born French-Jewish writer Albert Memmi demanded that the Zionist movement divorce itself from the Jewish religion, on the ground that "the Jewish national movement cannot be ruled by values which belong to a world that is no more." On the same day and from the same podium Prime Minister Golda Meir said with a grave scholarly air that "there is no difference between Jewish religion and Jewish nationality." This affirmation, which according to the local press "drew warm applause from almost all the delegates," was described by Mrs. Meir as "the ABC." The no-nonsense Prime Minister added: "An American can be an Anglican American or a Buddhist American, but I have yet to meet an Anglican Jew or a Buddhist Jew." For reasons best known to Mrs. Meir and her speech writers, she refrained from mentioning the far less dramatic spectacle of "American Jews," French, Argentinian, Georgian, British, and Brazilian Jews—all of whom carried passports testifying that they belonged to other "nationalities" though they were all bona fide Jews and even Zionists.

The fact, of course, is that in speaking of "nationality," Mrs. Meir was referring to "ethnicity" and "race." On this reading of the term, it would seem, a person of Jewish faith and French, American, or Brazilian "nationality" simply cannot exist—although, speaking strictly, even this cannot be maintained since any man belonging to any ethnic or "racial" group can lawfully be converted to Judaism. Moreover, according to this ethno-racial definition of "nationality," an Anglican or even a Buddhist Jew is indeed feasible since, if you are born a Jew, you will remain of Jewish "nationality" no matter what you choose to do with your religious convictions. In the same way, an atheist Jew is certainly feasible, and Mrs. Meir could not claim she was yet to meet one since most of her associates in her party and in the government can be so described.

THE TEL AVIV CORRESPONDENT of the London *Times,* Moshe Brilliant, printed a dispatch headed: "Israel court decides that atheist is still a Jew." It was a report concerning a drawn-out case in which Dr. Georges Tamarin, a Tel Aviv psychologist, went to court and demanded that the state registrar change the "nationality" classification on his identity card from "Jewish" to "Israeli." The Tel Aviv District Court rejected his application on the ground that "an individual cannot found a new nationality solely by talk." Subsequently, Dr. Tamarin took the case to the Supreme Court which, sitting as High Court of Appeal, also rejected his appeal. The *Times* report said that the Israeli court ruled that "to yield to his demand could lead to a schism in the Jewish people," and quoted Justice Agranat, the Court's president, as saying that "the wish of a handful of Jews to break away from the nation and to create a new concept of an Israeli nation was not a legitimate aspiration."

This, I decided, was something to be clarified more fully, and in Jerusalem I glanced through the local newspapers. This item carried by the *Jerusalem Post* was even smaller—and far less helpful—than that in the British paper. "There is no Israeli nation separate from the Jewish people," the paper quoted the Supreme Court as stating. "The Jewish people is composed not only of those residing in Israel but also of Diaspora Jewry." Examining the rest of the morning press, I discovered that all of them printed the same item prepared by a local news agency! The only interesting detail was to be found in the *Jerusalem Post.* Reporting Mrs. Golda Meir's address at the Zionist Congress, the paper added in parentheses: "She was apparently referring to the High Court decision earlier in the day to the effect that religion and nationality are inseparable."

The Supreme Court's verdict in the Tamarin case, then, was a major ideological decision. One evening newspaper, *Yedi'ot Aharaonot* opened its story thus:

> Does an Israeli nationality [*leom*] exist separately from a Jewish nationality? Is it possible, for instance, that a Jew can come forth and plead: "I am an Israeli by nationality and an atheist by religion"? Dr. Tamarin . . . believes it is possible. Through his counsel, Mr. Amnon Zichroni, he has argued: "When I immigrated to Israel (in 1949) there existed only a nucleus of an Israeli nation [*leom*] in the process of crystallization. Today, to the best of my understanding, such an Israeli nation already exists." What he intended to argue is that in the course of the years a separation from the Jewish nation has taken place—so that in addition to it a separate Israeli nation has been created. The State's Attorney Gabriel Bach argued that no such separation is possible between the two: Jewish nationality and Israeli nationality are one and the same thing.

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FROM THIS and other reports on the Tamarin case it becomes clear that the whole question as to whether an Israeli nationality exists apart from a Jewish nationality revolves round two crucial points of political terminology and ideology.

1. The precise meaning of the Hebrew word *leom* and what it denotes—a nation, a nationality, nationhood or ethnic group, and "ethnicity."
2. The meaning of "nationality" in Israeli ideological parlance and its relation to citizenship.

The word *leom* first occurs in the Hebrew Bible in the plural form, *leomim:* "Let peoples [*'amim*] serve you, and nations [*leomim*] bow down to you" (Genesis 27:29). All the three leading English translations of the Bible render the word *leom* as "nation" or "people" ("The people curse him who holds back grain . . ." Proverbs 11:26). As a matter of fact, in the two cases in which the word occurs in Genesis, it appears in the plural and as a synonym to "peoples" ("And the Lord said to her: Two nations are in your womb, and two peoples, born of you, shall be divided." Genesis 25:23).

In modern usage, too, *leom* has been generally used as an equivalent either of "nation" (*hever ha-leomim,* the League of Nations; *degel ha-leom,* the national flag; *ha-hymnon ha-leomi,* the national anthem; and so on), or of "nationality" (*ha-leom ha-Americani,* American nationality). However, since the Hebrew for "nation" is more generally *ummah* (*ha-ummot ha-meuhadot,* the United Nations; *ha-ummah ha-yehudit,* the Jewish nation), the word *leom* has in recent years been used more to denote "nationality." When Dr. Tamarin applied for his *leom* to be changed from "Jewish" to "Israeli," therefore, he was plainly referring to the "nationality" classification on his identity card.

This brings us to the meaning of "nationality" in Israeli political terminology. As the London *Times's* Tel Aviv correspondent pointed out, "nationality and citizenship are two different concepts in Israel"—in contrast to practically every other country in the world with the notable exception of the Soviet Union. In all these countries, nationality and citizenship are not only not two different concepts but are virtually synonymous: if you are a British citizen then you are automatically a British "national"; an American citizen is likewise a national of the United States of America, which means that he has United States "nationality."

In Israel—and in the Soviet Union—the picture is different. In both of these countries you can be a citizen of the state and a member of a separate "nationality." In Israel, you can be an Israeli by citizenship (though such a classification does not appear in Israeli identity cards) and a Jew or an Arab by nationality. (An Arab can be a Moslem, a Christian, or a Druse by religion). In the Soviet Union, again, you can be a Soviet citizen and a Jew, a Russian, a Ukrainian, a Georgian, or a Lithuanian by "nationality." In this sense, indeed, "nationality" becomes synonymous with "ethnicity" and "ethnic group."

An even more intricate problem is presented by the question of the relationship between citizenship and nationality. For while it is technically true that in Israel citizenship and nationality are two different concepts—and while technically you can be a "citizen of the State" and belong either to the Jewish or Arab nationality—Israel's own definition of herself as a "Jewish state" makes nationality and citizenship overlap to the point of being completely interchangeable.

This point can be illumined by a brief analogy with the situation in the Soviet Union. While the respective positions in the two countries are similar in that, strictly speaking, both of them make a distinction between citizenship and nationality, the Soviet Union does not define itself as a nation-state (or rather a "nationality-state") in the sense in which Israel does. It is quite true that persons belonging to the Russian "nationality" hold top positions and are generally considered a privileged group in the Soviet Union. Yet, juridically speaking, the Soviet Union has never described itself as a "Russian state." In contrast Israel, by simultaneously defining herself as a Jewish state and making a distinction between citizenship and nationality, renders the terms "Israeli" and "Jewish" synonymous. State's Attorney Bach's insistence that Israeli and Jewish nationalities are identical is fully corroborated by Israel's national ideology and self-image as a "Jewish state."

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Some additional light may be shed on this point by the way the Israeli Supreme Court formulated its decision. In the course of a lengthy summation of the opinion of the court, President Agranat noted that he was prepared to assume the appellant felt in all good faith that he was ethnically an Israeli and not a Jew. However, he continued, the appellant's claim that he was consequently entitled to have his ethnic grouping registered as "Israeli" instead of "Jewish" would only follow if he could prove that in fact such an ethnic group did exist. (This summary is taken from the January 25 *Jerusalem Post* "Law Report," prepared by Doris Lankin. It is notable that the Hebrew term *leom* is rendered by Lankin as "ethnic group" rather than "nation" or "nationality." However, considering the interpretation which Israeli law gives the word, one can hardly accuse her of distortion. Ironically enough, this rendering makes it far easier for the courts to reject the kind of application which Dr. Tamarin made, since plainly no one could claim—let alone prove—that such a thing as an Israeli "ethnic group" has come into being.)

Clearly, then, what we have here is a complete misunderstanding resulting from two totally opposing usages of the term *leom*. The State of Israel, as represented by State's Attorney Bach and as interpreted by the Supreme Court, maintains a concept of "nationality" that is identical in every respect to "ethnicity." The appellant in the case speaks of *leom* in the sense of "nationality" as it is universally used today—i.e., as being equivalent to citizenship. This latter concept of the term views nationality as a legal-geographical rather than an ethno-racial term.

BE THAT as it may, the official Israeli position vis-à-vis the nationality question—as presented and correctly interpreted by the Supreme Court in its latest decision—contains rather far-reaching implications for two different groups of people: namely, Israelis who are not Jews and Jews who are not Israelis.

To start with the former group, Israel's insistence on simultaneously seeing herself as a Jewish state and drawing a clear distinction between the "nationality" of her Jewish and non-Jewish citizens inevitably raises the cardinal question as to the status of those Israelis who happen not to be Jews. For the fact is that while citizenship and nationality are two different concepts in Israel, there is a virtual equation of citizenship and *statehood*—in the sense that any ethnically designated state must perforce identify itself with those of its citizens who happen to have the same ethnic designation. A few years ago senior government official put the matter as succinctly and as accurately as such matters can be put. "One cannot," said the Israeli Prime Minister's Adviser on Arab Affairs Shmuel Toledano, "expect the Arabs of Israel to be loyal to the State; they belong to another nationality." Elaborating further, Mr. Toledano explained that, after all, one cannot expect Israel's Arabs "to believe in the national Jewish values."

So much for Israelis who are not Jews. The other group—which comprises Jews who are not Israelis and totals some 83 percent of Jews everywhere—is less directly affected by Israel's concept of Jewish "nationality" than the former. But viewed in a theoretical-ideological context, the Israeli position can in the long run make the situation of non-Israeli Jews somewhat precarious.

A British Jew is a citizen of the United Kingdom and therefore—according to his country's definition of "nationality"—a British national. An American Jew is a citizen—and therefore a national—of the United States of America. And so it is with French, German, Danish, and Egyptian Jews. Israel, in effect, views these as Jewish "nationals" and—in accordance with her own definition of herself as a Jewish state and with the concept of nationality implicit in her laws—as consequently in some way "belonging" to the Jewish state.

It is readily to be seen that, while such a theoretical-ideological position does not materially affect the present status of non-Israeli Jews, it can be used to advantage by any regime that chooses to be hostile to its Jews or attempts to cause them embarrassment and even harassment. This, basically, is what happened in the Arabic-speaking countries following the 1948 war in Palestine and in Poland after the Six-Day War. There is no guarantee whatever against its happening in other parts of the world. □

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Jean Bloch-Michel

Revolt of the Flics

PARIS

The 1968 French elections, held on the heels of the May riots, gave the Gaullist UDR and the Right generally a parliamentary majority. Everyone knew—as Edgar Faure, prominent member of the majority, said—that the primary cause of this success was fear. At political meetings UDR candidates showed films of the Paris riots. Burned-out automobiles and the Nanterre disorders were effective campaign arguments.

After the elections and the formation of the Chaban-Delmas government, Minister of the Interior Raymond Marcellin—though taking a firm stand in prosecuting those involved in public disturbances—had mixed designs. He wanted to curb unrest in order to ease the electorate and to demonstrate the government's strength. Yet the atmosphere of insecurity and unrest was not without usefulness: it gave him the chance to make a constant show of his authority, and it also kept the voters in a state of salutary fear. Obviously, the instrument of this policy was the police. (Like Joseph Prudhomme's sword, the police are charged with the responsibility to defend public institutions and, when the situation requires it, to imperil them.) The result of this policy was to widen still more the rift, now several years old, between the people and the police.

On public holidays, the corps that protects the peace of Paris wears the red fourragère, which testifiies to its acts of bravery during the Liberation struggle of August 1944. Yet the very award of this high decoration was intended to make people forget the earlier behavior of the French police. For the four years of occupation, they had carried out the orders of the Nazis or their Vichy servants. And even if public recollection of their actions now is blurred, the collective memory does preserve the picture of the big roundups of Jews—men, women, and children—which the Paris police carried out in 1942. After the Liberation, the police profited from a surge of public sympathy, which arose in response to a last-minute about-face that gave them a chance to reinstate themselves in society. Furthermore, a 1946 law granted the policeman a status that made him a citizen like any other, recognizing his right to organize and strike.

In 1947, after the break with the Communists, the government had to cope with vast, revolutionary-style strikes. The then Minister of the Interior Jules Moch, a Socialist, put them down with great violence. Gun fire was exchanged and people were killed. Serving on Moch's staff was a young functionary upon whom this lesson was not to be lost—Raymond Marcellin.

At this juncture, it was borne in on the government that to use the police in repressive actions of this kind had its difficulties. Because the police were by now organized, many of them belonging to the Conféderation Générale du Travail (CGT), they balked at such assignments. Accordingly, a special corps was created, specifically to maintain public order—the Compagnies Républicaines de Securité, or CRS. Because CRS units were organized along military lines and the men, even if married, had to live in barracks, it was assumed that they would be sheltered from the currents agitating the citizenry. Additional steps were taken to regain control of the regular police. In 1945 men who had too openly compromised themselves during the Nazi occupation had been dropped; but now a second cleanup was ordered. This 1947 purge aimed at cleansing the ranks of Communists or philo-Communists; as always happens in such cases—it hit everyone with "leftist" sympathies.

Then, in 1948 a new law defining the status of policemen preserved their right to organize but withdrew their right to strike. Purified of all leftist elements, the police—especially in Paris—were stirred up by rightist groups. The latters' activities were particularly effective in a period when they were receiving the virtually undisguised support of Prefect of Police Baylot and when an officer such as Commissioner Dides, who had collaborated extensively with the Nazis, was able to foment within the force little plots against his own Minister of the Interior François Mitterand.

The rightward politicization of the police resulted in their sharing in several plots aim-

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ing to overthrow the Fourth Republic and, in 1958, in their marching on the Chamber of Deputies. This event, one of the most serious the last government of the Fourth Republic had to contend with, was among the factors that convinced President Pflimlin he must cede his place to a stronger man—de Gaulle.

Just as the Army, which had brought de Gaulle to power, very quickly became his principle adversary, so the police, after helping to establish the regime and serving as one of its most reliable auxiliaries, became troublesome. This was largely inevitable, since the policy initiated in 1948 was accentuated under de Gaulle. Essentially, this policy made the police a corps totally isolated from the nation. To compensate for the rights taken from them, the police were given extraordinary privileges. First, they were allowed salaries way out of line with those of other public servants. In consideration of the "risks" involved, a junior officer earns more than a teacher; a police commissioner at the end of his career earns more than an *agrégé* professor at the end of his. Finally, the police found themselves being treated more and more as special persons, not subject to common law. As they came to be assigned to increasingly political tasks (the struggle against the FLN in Algeria and OAS at home), the police were granted almost total immunity from prosecution. There was general agreement that they were never to be charged with the excesses they often, and for the most part unnecessarily, displayed. Not even the most serious of these excesses ever resulted in court action against them—not in the case of the dozens of Algerians killed in 1959, or of the eight people in the 1960 Charonne demonstration who were murdered as they were taking refuge in a Métro station. Not one officer has ever been brought to trial, and if administrative sanctions were taken (clearly inadequate in such cases), none has ever been made public.

By protecting the police in these ways, the government was pursuing the policy of isolation it had begun in 1948. (Sometimes this protection has come from the highest levels: in a televised talk on June 25, 1971, President Georges Pompidou expressed his "indignation" over attacks directed against the police and tendered them an expression of his esteem—something no president of the Republic before him had ever deemed useful to do.) More and more hated by the people, the police found comfort only in the government, which unfailingly supported them, provided only they obeyed orders blindly.

To prevent the police from being "recognized" and becoming victims of a public impulse to settle accounts with them, a vast game of job transfers was instituted in 1968; for example, CRS units were sent from Brittany to squash leftists at Nanterre, and police from Marseille were dispatched to restore order in Lille. Police personnel utilized in this way worked exhausting shifts; they were billeted in makeshift accommodations, and any family life was impossible. Furthermore, the Minister of the Interior "overused" the police for obvious political reasons—to demonstrate his strength and, if necessary, to provoke unrest in order to put it down. For someone who, like myself, lives near the Latin Quarter, the spectacle of squads of police helmeted and armed with shields and clubs became a daily experience. It was clear that most of the time they were serving no purpose but a provocative show of strength.

The inhabitants of the Quarter and particularly its small businessmen began to protest. One Saturday in June, violence broke out—windows were shattered, shops ransacked—without the police evincing any willingness to intervene. In point of fact, these disorders were too timely for anyone to believe them spontaneous, and all witnesses realized they were a gross provocation. What's more, it so happened that such incidents were never repeated, whether the police were present or absent. For ever since what is delicately termed police "malaise" has surfaced and the men have made it clear they've had enough of being thus employed, the Latin Quarter has been free of police—and calmer than it has been for the last three years.

The "malaise" has arisen because the police have became aware of the political and sociological demands made on them. Now some of their union leaders have realized that the police must become once again the servants of the state and not of the party in power (elections are approaching), and the entire force, from top to bottom, finally has realized that its exclusion from the larger community is intolerable.

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This nascent political awareness was sparked by a grave incident. On March 10, 1970, the movement known as Occident, which makes no bones about being fascist, received permission to hold a meeting in the Palais des Sports. M. Monate, secretary general of the Fédération des Syndicats de Police, has since disclosed that the police had reported how members of the Occident movement had brought weapons to their rented headquarters but that no one had demurred. On the day of the meeting, antifascist groups organized a counterdemonstration outside the Palais des Sports. The Occident fascists issued forth and clubbed the counterdemonstrators, throwing their victims to the ground at the feet of the police, who refused to intervene; when criticized for standing by, they replied that they "had no orders." Another police union official pointed out how very suspect this was, since the Ministry was in the habit of sending substantial numbers of police to "contain" Communist demonstrations whenever they occurred —although, he added, they pass "so peacefully that they remind me of the processions held in my village on August 15 for the Feast of the Holy Virgin."

Thus proof was impressed not only upon the public but upon the police themselves that they were being used not to maintain order but to serve government policy. The special consideration granted a fascist movement—not out of sympathy with it but to exasperate leftists in the hope that they would, in turn, indulge in some excess—led police union officials to consider the problem of how their members were being politically exploited.

The police know, of course, that they can count on the government to protect them in all circumstances—especially when they are in the wrong. But despite their being relegated, literally and figuratively, to barracks, the police cannot help but also be members of society. In this respect, their situation is growing more and more difficult: their wives are insulted, their children are ragged at school. The enforced segregation exacerbated their anger and, therefore, their brutality: the more detested, the harder they lay about them. The more excluded from the community at large, the more they long to take their revenge on that society for the harm done them. All these factors coincided, furthermore, with the policy of the government, which never made a move either to put an end to police brutalities or to make even a show of condemning them.

But this situation could not continue. The police had only two directions in which to move: either they could assert that they were an all-powerful organ and that the exorbitant powers already recognized as theirs gave them all rights, including the right to develop their own policy; or they could elect to rejoin the community. Too little politicized to choose the first path, the police embarked on the second. On March 4, 1971, a few days before the Occident demonstration, member of the Paris police force knocked off work for several hours and spread out through the streets, distributing leaflets and trying to "make contact" with the public. This initiative came from the rank and file; their officers tried unsuccessfully to check it. And thus, for the first time the police signalled their wish to escape from the social isolation in which the government had determined to contain them in order to have them more completely at its disposition.

When the leaders of the uniformed police, meeting in Evian, threatened to occupy the Hôtel Matignon and the Ministry of Finance and even "to march on the Elysée," their alleged pretext was a disagreement over pay. But let us not be misled: this was a pretext only—or perhaps their demands took such violent form only because of the larger social context. The government responded to the intemperate language of the union leaders with administrative action: five leaders were cashiered or forced to retire. The government wished thereby to demonstrate that while everything is permitted to the police and absolute immunity guaranteed them when it comes to excesses they commit vis-à-vis the public, they are absolutely forbidden to challenge the government's actions. But the sense of being a citizen above the law does not go by halves: when policemen know they are never prosecuted even if guilty of real crimes, why would they be willing to see themselves penalized for statements, albeit violent, or for threats that are not translated into actions?

The situation in which the government finds itself today is of its own making and somewhat analogous to the situation it faced in 1958 and again in 1961 in relation to the Army. For years, it condoned the Army's every excess in Algeria, but then was surprised that

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the Army should claim other rights and immunities, this time on a political level. When dealing with such organizations as the Army or the police, to encourage or to permit practices that run counter to justice and law means that for a limited time one is assured of the services of a group ready for anything. But it means also that there is no prospect of changing a given policy, and that the privileged group may not be allowed to be part of society as a whole. If the government does change policies or if the corps wishes to emerge from its social isolation, a showdown is inevitable. That is what happened with the French Army over Algeria. And it is what is happening today with the police. We can only rejoice that, unlike the Army, the police are giving no sign of having political intentions. For the government as it is today, the fact that the police are demanding reintegration into society at large is nonetheless a threat. It is, above all, an indication that the government will no longer be able to use the police to maintain the fear that helped it gain the kind of majority it won in 1968.

After some months, differences between the police and the government subsided. No doubt the police were officially promised a "reevaluation" of their pay and "career emoluments." No doubt, also, they were given other guarantees: notably, a promise that they would be used with greater discretion. If such promises were tendered, they were cautiously formulated, but everything leads one to believe that they were in fact made, the chief clue being a suddenly much more measured attitude on the part of police union officials.

These developments give food for thought. Modern society practices a kind of segregation with regard to certain groups; it may wish to make use of them, as in the case of the police today or of the Army yesterday, or it may wish to intimidate them. But, one after another, groups set apart from society rebel. This began with the young people. (The title alone of a recently published book is a clue to the problem involved—"Youth Must Be Decolonized").

This was carried further in the prisons. For society, incarceration is a way of getting rid of delinquents—just as it gets rid of the young by shutting them up in schools or exiling them to campuses—but this method is challenged by those who must endure it (the rebellious prisoners) and by those who are responsible for it (the magistrates). One final group that is segregated will be heard from, too, one of these days—the insane. So far there has been no rebellion in the asylums, but already there is "malaise"—this is the way things always start —among psychiatrists, who are increasingly unwilling to be the accomplices of a policy whose disastrous consequences they are in a position to know well.

These are all signs of aspirations toward a more open society. The countless barriers and fences that enclose modern society are becoming increasingly unbearable for those people whom such barriers cut off from a community to which they feel—justifiably—they belong. But every attempt to break down the walls will finds society wanting, for society generally thinks in political terms, and these are not political matters. Similiarly, governments and political parties, elected assemblies and appointed bodies, are discovering that they are incapable of coping with situations they not only have failed but are not constituted to anticipate. The revolt of the students in 1968, the revolt of the police in 1971, the revolt of the prisons in 1972, and the revolt to come one of these days in the mental institutions—no one has or will have foreseen them, few will understand them, and no one is ready to deal with them.

Translated by ADRIENNE FOULKE □

Nicola Chiaromonte

We mourn the death of this distinguished writer who, both in the United States and Italy, played an important role in bringing to intellectual life his integrity, his intelligence, his learning, and his unqualified devotion to liberty.

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David Bromwich

"Walden Is Alive Again"

Looking through a good deal of the literature about communes, one is persuaded that something important must be afoot, and that the writers have not discovered in what the importance consists. About one thing there can be no exaggeration: communes represent the most visible form of rebellion against modern industrial society. It is not yet an effective or thoroughgoing rebellion—communards wait every month for welfare checks from The Beast—but it is extremely personal. It does involve a degree of material sacrifice. And some of those who make the sacrifice could have managed well within the system. The bare fact of this rebellion is at any rate hard to miss, and it is conveyed pretty accurately wherever one reads about the subject.

What seems less accurate is the claim, rendered in the coloring of *Psychology Today* and the Esalen Institute, which is sometimes made to emerge from the communal movement: that this means the end of *our mechanized, plastic society which is the cancer of Western civilization.* Such formulations offer a kind of pleasant high temperature thrill but, like all apocalyptic comforts, they have a rather dubious analytic value. The communal movement is after all a complex phenomenon, and one ought to respect this complexity by avoiding wild—i.e., tedious and predictable—generalizations. My own visits to communes, I had better say, have not been very extensive; but I was never led to think of communes as portending the end of anything.

I have to thank Marjorie Hoyt and Barbara Polland for helping me to track down some of the communes they knew.

Perhaps it would be wiser to call them a new beginning, as of a structure running alongside but not intending to supplant the industrial system. Yet, we may be forgiven for wondering how new it all really is.

> Practically, the old have no very important advice to give the young, their own experience has been so partial, and their lives have been such miserable failures, for private reasons, as they must believe; and it may be that they have some faith left which belies that experience, and they are only less young than they were. I have lived some thirty years on this planet, and I have yet to hear the first syllable of valuable advice from my seniors. They have told me nothing, and probably cannot tell me anything to the purpose. Here is life, an experiment to a great extent untried by me; but it does not avail me that they have tried it. If I have any experience which I think valuable, I am sure to reflect that this my Mentors said nothing about.

This is Thoreau, of course, and it makes a good text for any discussion of present-day communes. It is still true, for example, that the form of rejection precedes the content. The turning away itself, merely the gesture, is what matters.

Only the most elusive of "positive values" inspire the building of rural communes. Yet one cannot hope to be sympathetic (or even critical) toward the movement without first separating out a few of its characteristic articles of faith. Chief among these—if one were to make out a list that simplified a great deal and distorted only a little—would be belief in the proper ascendency of the community over the individual. Competitiveness therefore simply does not exist: a good thing

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or a bad, depending on what it means in detail. In the education of children, most of us would agree, we could do with a little less of the spirit of competition. To this position the communal movement actively subscribes, and —except in the case of religious communes bound by a peculiar discipline—it is very likely to pursue it to the furthest extremes. Also, and this follows smoothly if not necessarily from the other points, most communards believe in the abolition of what is called the nuclear family.

The abstractness is already killing: let us get down to some cases.

EXCEPT FOR THE INVADING FORCE of gas stations, Venice, California, is a loose assortment of pleasant, slightly run-down shanties spread across an asphalt plain that recedes into the ocean. The place always looked like a radical hang-out, though it became one only recently. "In Venice, there one is free" I found printed on a lavatory wall. There, too, one discovers a rich population of urban communes: apartment buildings let out wholly or in part to professionals, students, aimless (but employed) young people who live, pay, and sometimes get along together. These living arrangements divide into a plethora of "food conspiracies," a shady term describing the quite ordinary procedure by which consumers purchase large orders of food wholesale. Certain communes go in for guerrilla theater, and then fall apart. Others, more successful, resolve on some kind of group project in which profits stay ahead of alienation, such as a bookshop or a health food store. One does have to perform tasks recognized as socially useful by the outside world in order to preserve an enclave away from it, and how is guerrilla theater useful?

Urban communes are generally self-supporting: the group members know that in the city they can survive only so long as they are "realistic." Adjustments must be made, though not compromises; the bill can be met without the owner being appeased. This realism, as far as it goes, is what sets the urban communes apart from the rural communes (or collectives, or cooperatives, or communities: the names are interchangeable, and someone is always offended when you use the wrong name for *his*). Communes in the city are first of all practical: cheaper and less worrisome than single apartments, with only a marginal diminishment in domestic luxuries. In defiance of all the clichés of popular psychology, the pressure of urban life seems to have made them healthier—palpably so—than their more spectacular counterparts outside the city.

An interesting commune near Venice grew from the resources, and resourcefulness, of 15 lawyers and legal assistants who needed a decent way of caring for children in families where both adults worked. Baby-sitters had been found unsatisfactory all around; the solution was a commune revolving around group funding, group meals, and organized child care. After several months in the planing, the commune has now lasted with a steady membership for more than a year. The physical layout is intelligent: eight apartments constructed along two rows, like certain motels, with the walls between apartments torn down in favor of doors. In each row there is a children's room where half of the kids sleep, watched by their adult neighbors on either side. Back of the apartments, a kitchen-and-dining room, a playroom, an arts-and-crafts room (both of these for the nursery school, which is self-contained), a library, and, off to the side, a little purgatory for television. Contributions to the common fund are made according to income—progressively, of course—though it has recently become necessary to require a "minimum" amount for the discouragement of loafers. Meals get cooked once a week by each family; weekend duty—staying at home, that is—strikes every seventh week; and the responsibilities of child care are shared out similarly, with the help of a hired staff.

The members of this commune, I gathered, agree in wanting to get rid of the nuclear family, even if their strength of conviction varies.

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In this they are not likely to succeed: they would need stricter rules and an inflexible resolve. But the abolition of the nuclear family looks like an unfair criterion of success; and to me, at all events, the end seems less than self-evidently desirable. Communards never stop talking about the evils of the nuclear family, but how much of this do they believe, how much do they drum into themselves? The successes of the lawyers' commune are certainly plain enough so that allowances can be made for their falling short of their final goal. The commune provides an excellent focus for the radical activities of its members: in legal collectives, in the National Lawyers Guild, in left-wing political sects (the old Peace and Freedom party is still a fixture in Venice). The day I came to visit, everyone was getting ready for a sympathy rally for George Jackson, "going out this afternoon." Meanwhile the children are reasonably happy, playing with rattles and absorbing their parents' politics. If there was anything strange about the commune, it was the slight pall of austerity one could feel from time to time; in what should have been a relaxed living room bookshelf I saw only complete editions of Marx, Lenin, and Mao, and, battered and alone, an old hard-cover copy of *Barbary Shore*. Yet this sort of commune has to be called eminently sensible—a small bourgeois compliment which some of its members might frown upon.

Where the "practical" outlook is lacking the results are disastrous, and the failure then needs to be viewed through a screen of self-deception. It is not *we* that failed, it is society that failed us. The communal experiment thus gains a significance, purely symbolic, which is untainted by any perception of things as they really are. This is the syndrome of a good many rural communes where, so far from complaining about the squalor that comes from an oblivion to planing, everyone is at peace, resigned, "enlightened." Yet the feeling of community so created rings perfectly true. Surely we ought to ask why this should be so—why, moreover, the sensation of being at peace within a completely isolated community should seem so attractive at this particular time to the sensibilities of this particular Younger Generation.

Let us make a small digression and return to the point just barely outlined about the conflicting desires of the individual and the group. Individualism, as we know it, was a product of bourgeois culture during one stage of its hegemony. It found its highest expression in the concept—no less, in the actuality—of the hero. But in the industrial nations this culture has now lost much of its self-confidence; it is showing signs of exhaustion. And so quite suddenly, with the exception of astronauts and athletes, there are no more heroes. Instead there is a nostalgia, partly desperate longing, for the good old days. Young audiences always feel a peculiar thrill when they hear Ingrid Bergman crying out to Humphrey Bogart, in *Casablanca,* that this is a terrible world where "anything can happen." Oh, yes, anything could happen then; those words register a world of possibility in which Bogart/Rick could indeed make a difference. Rick no longer makes any difference, life is too easy, and our own Anything is too horrible even to contemplate. We have no Spains in which to fight the good fight. Something very dear has passed away, though we have our compensation: with the erosion of individualism came a sort of displacement, a spreading out of the heroic intensity to embrace the entire community.

Yet it is felt that our society nurtures a false sense of community. On the streets of New York City, a man living in the forests of Vermont told me, you can't look people in the face. (Thoreau: "To be awake is to be alive. I have never yet met a man who was quite awake. How could I have looked him in the face?") The wider community is sick, and contaminating, and you had better get away from it before it gets you. Communes have their special fascination because they release natural communitarian sentiments, without directing them toward an object

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which is false in the most obvious ways. The popular use of marijuana would seem to be a very plain symptom of this shifting of energies. The physical kick is of course potent, one should not discount that, but the appeal of the stuff derives in some part from the act of sharing it, the creation of an inner circle secure against the threats of a hostile world. "Don't Bogart that joint, mah friend, pass it over to me": now we can all be heroes together.

Urban communes, like religious ones, are exceptions to every rule. About the religious experiments—minority faiths, including various types of Buddhism and Christian revivalism—one remarks that they seem to promote ecstasy while prohibiting ordinary fun, and that they demand practical discipline of a kind quite alien to the hippie *Weltanschauung*. The cooperative groups in cities, on the other hand, by their very location deny any escape from the reality of politics, or the reality of getting along with the neighbors. Yet it must be an axiom of everyday life that wherever too many people of a like mind get together a certain mindlessness is likely to flourish. The tension of conflict has been lost, and with it a part of the faculty of judgment.

Joanne, who came to Venice from Iowa and is, at 18, the youngest member of her commune, will provide an instructive case in point. When I spoke with her, she was operating a switchboard that does duty for several food collectives, and between calls she told me to sit down and then nodded, yes, I could have some of her Pepsi Cola. "There's acid in it," she warned me a few seconds later. This surprising news must have made me flinch a little, because she let out a roguish giggle. Only a joke. Joanne mentioned that her parents didn't approve of her living in a commune. "You know, they think it's some *freak* pad where all we do is make love all day, or something."

Underground rag sheets were noticeable around the room, and of these one in particular was recommended to me, which contained a women's lib slant on the movie *Repulsion* and speculated, in the course of a crossword puzzle, that John Wayne was "effete, underneath all the bullshit." There were also some articles about the Venice Canal, a project voted through by the Los Angeles City Council which will deprive Venice of much of its low-cost housing. This brought us to politics, and I asked Joanne what she thought of the Peace and Freedom party. She answered vaguely but, the more so as time went on, passionately. "They want to set up a whole new *system,* instead of the one we have now, where everybody gets ripped off all the time . . . the government rips people off at their jobs, and everything. And they want to do away with that system. Well, *I* don't know." Speaking of the government, she wondered: "What do *they* know about being poor, what do *they* know about hunger, and people on the streets? They've got plenty in their fat bellies," she spat out the last word as though kicking a city councilman in the groin, perhaps a bit startled by her own sharpness. "Yeah," a boy mused over in the corner, "it's hard to fight ignorance."

My prediction is that Joanne will go on to a rural commune. She looks like a nice person, full of the best good feelings; but she does not want life to be subtle, or difficult, so that it might require of political judgment more than the ascription of substantial blame to an insubstantial "they." She does not want to simplify, she wants to level. And for the gratification of that impulse rural communes have been the readiest chopping-grounds.

"SOMETHING DAMNED INTERESTING must be happening on top of that mountain," an auto mechanic thought out loud, just before I took the turn-off for the Rainbow Farm commune near Eugene, Oregon, "because it seems like there's been a hundred kids going up and coming down each day." The hundreds of kids going up and coming down (I believe no pun was intended) were of the least pleas-

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ant sort of parasite: "crashers" who traveled from one comune to another, stayed as long as the going was good, and left with the onset of climatic or financial bad weather. Literal bad weather had begun when I arrived—the sun was no longer pure in the afternoons—and I found never more than 40 souls present at supper time, which is when the population of any commune reaches its peak.

Souls, so one must speak of them in this context, for the soul of each person was subjected to a furious cultivation in the moments before eating breakfast or supper. The ritual consisted of the chanting of several prayers and correctly Eastern-sounding *mantras,* consummating in a communal Om-saying, and coming round to a severe denouement with an "Our Father, Who art in Heaven. . . ." It was the religion of Mish-Mash, yet it could be curiously affecting. Forty people simultaneously droning "Om," for example, sound like parts of a strange and enormous pipe organ, and one gets a euphoric sense of drowning in the noise. After the last prayer, a Jewish boy from the Bronx solemnly intoned "Wow," and added a minute later, "Chanting sure does make you hungry." Whether this was the real purpose of the thing I never could discover. The food at any rate seemed good—though an imaginative cowboy could have done better—and I do not hold it responsible for the intestinal virus I mysteriously contracted the day I left Rainbow Farm.

Mish-Mash does not, as far as I am concerned, come under the heading of religious discipline. Although the people of Rainbow Farm were irrational—I use this as a descriptive not a pejorative term—their irrational beliefs tended toward the eclectic. Tibetan mysticism, Zen, Yoga, astrology, Yin-and-Yang theoretics, Jungian psychology and, who knows, Madame Blavatsky: all these were appreciated at the commune, but no one set of rules was strictly respected. In general, Rainbow Farm showed the rustic habits of city dwellers trying to "pass" in the country. There were no electrical appliances, no toilets, only one or two lights, and (this was strictly respected) a vegetarian diet. Flies were always present in huge quantities in the communal kitchen, but there was no flypaper. Religious belief without rules, flies without flypaper: would this have puzzled the average American farmer?

Everything in the commune was appallingly dirty: one aspect of the place, among others, which made it unhealthly for small children. When I arrived two members of the commune had unaccountably come down with worms; while I stayed on, a benevolent Saint Bernard named Mojave received treatment for a skin infection; when I left several people were deciding what to do with a quantity of goat's milk thought to be contaminated. Only a small number of people are involved in making any decision at Rainbow Farm, because only a small number care enough to help. Resentment on the part of these steady workers is for the most part suppressed, but when it finds a voice there is a tone, or rather an undertone, of alienation. Diane was sitting in the dirt eating a late afternoon lunch, with the cat beside her eating from her daughter's bowl, when she spoke of the hopelessness of getting houses built for the Oregon winter. "You can try and tell them, and get things done, if you want to," she told another girl, whose own daughter was crying for blackberries and being told to finish her onions and beans. "A year ago I tried to get things together, I tried to get everybody organized, but it never works. Now I just don't have the energy." This is a "let it be" commune.

What do you do for a good time at Rainbow Farm—you certainly have a good deal of leisure? Noticing the absence of televisions, radios, phonographs, and newspapers, I made for the last obvious source of recreation, books. The communal library occupied about one quarter of the Eastern part of the kitchen, and included a few volumes on Buddhism, Kenneth Keniston's *The Uncommitted,* Pound's *Cantos* complete, equal amounts of Rod McKuen and Tolstoy, an

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extremely well-thumbed novel by Ken Kesey, and some organic food cookbooks. While I made my little inspection a lovely oriental girl was reading *Love Story* topless, complaining that it bored her to death. Otherwise the books were shelved; the only things I actually saw people reading were comic books.

The members of Rainbow Farm, on the face of it, are simply bored. That their suppers can be extended over a period of four hours helps to blunt this sensation, but does not help enough. So the rule is that mornings are elated, afternoons depressed, and evenings—when they go right—so full of dope that you can't feel much of anything. "Did you bring some dope?" tourists generally get asked as they drive into Rainbow Farm, and a negative answer is greeted by the *even so* of cheerful accommodation: "Well, that's OK."

Though the hardest workers in the commune, many of them, had gone through a "heavy" period with drugs some time back, their indulgence lately was confined to marijuana and hashish, and even with these they relied mostly on the supply brought by crashers. Yet drugs were important. Drugs "made you lazy," this much was known, but to limit laziness would be to limit freedom, would it not? You worked—hoeing in the garden, feeding the chickens, building houses, shopping in town—whenever you happened not to be feeling lazy. Anyhow, maybe dope inspired creativity. Arthur, nine years old, showed me the beginnings of a model geodesic dome, fashioned out of toothpicks, which had been revealed to him in a vision "while I was high." Drugs for children? On the notion, perhaps, that it would be especially interesting to observe their effect on these naturally creative beings. Most of the children around Rainbow Farm, it turned out, had been fed LSD at one time or another. Sometimes adults went on trips with them, sometimes they stayed and watched.

Here it would be proper to say some deeply felt words against the use of drugs, except that to do so would be so obviously to miss the point. The drugs are not after all essential, they are only the short-term means of calming a disease of the spirit. This disease seemed quite immediate to me, but I find it hard to describe with much accuracy: the nearest I can do is to speak of what is known in child psychology as "loss of affect." Children with "low affect," children unable to react in a normal way to emotional stimulus—whose life of feeling is without any intensity—such children often come from the sort of family remarkable for an extreme permissiveness. Their breakdown is either a complete going to pieces or a nearly complete withdrawal; permissiveness, we know, can be construed as a form of rejection, and this is the result. If a child is given too much freedom, an eminent clinical psychologist once remarked, he feels that with every step he's walking off the edge of the world.

With few exceptions, the people at Rainbow Farm were securely and utterly withdrawn: they had walked off the edge of the world. And now they were doing their best to communicate the disease to *their* children, and somehow one could find no way of blaming them—they were still children themselves. It is not easy to get down the sense of living among people who seem in every way normal, yet lack every human energy: like drifting, endlessly drifting, in a sea of amniotic fluid that never moves outward to the pulse of life. There is no discussion, no argument, no back-and-forth talking, no heat or light or friction. Rather a schematic group of non-responses: "really," "right on," "for sure," "that's cool," "far out," "I can dig it," "that's your trip." These all mean the same thing, they do not involve separate kinds of implication, and they all mean "let us have silence."

Toward actual children the Rainbow Farm parents took a curious attitude. On the one hand, and I never had any doubt of this, there was some version of genuine love seeking an outlet. The communards tended to

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have gloomy memories of their own childhood, as a time when too much dependence went with not enough attention, and they wanted their children to be at once freer and better cared for. Yet to provide decent care they would have needed a mental stability to which none of them could lay claim, as well as a sense of responsibility entirely foreign to their habits. So attention was pretty well forgotten, and in its place came freedom. But how do you free a five-year-old? The common answer given to a child requiring attention was: "Fuck off, don't hang around me all day, stay on your own trip." I would not want to count how often I heard children, nursery-school age, being turned away with those simple and ultimate words: "Fuck off." And what could the kids do for their own trip? There were very few other children to play with, and the forests were thick and not well suited to a five-year-old all alone.

In retrospect this treatment of children seems to me the worst thing about Rainbow Farm—the only thing quite tangibly evil, because it was more than *self*-destructive. Children raised according to the beliefs of the liberal middle class might legitimately claim to have been, in certain respects, molded selfishly after the image of their parents, but there could be no doubt that "The world was all before them, where to choose/Their place of rest": they might become merchants, or professors, or surprise everyone by joining a commune or shipping off to Madagascar. There was in any case this element of choice. However, a commune such as Rainbow Farm blinkers the choice as effectively as any military school. The communards have an odd way of kidding themselves, imagining what would happen "if our kids rebelled against us, and went straight." But this is pure fantasy. Where would the kids learn about the other side to which they might defect? Where—one is driven to that horrid old phrase—where is their "equipment for life"? For the moment the Rainbow Farm kids looked healthy enough, but then they had all been on the Farm for less than a year. I would not like to answer for their future. "Equipment for life" can scarcely be supplied by teachers who teach the fate-governing influence of a Scorpio Rising.

More than any general impression it was a particular incident that brought me to understand the derangement of the emotions which, I think, must be characteristic of "let it be" communes like Rainbow Farm. The thing has stayed vividly in my mind, and may be worth recalling in some detail: the main actors (for it was nothing if not very wild theater) were Garrick, Lee, and Skeeter. Garrick was the New York boy already mentioned, in fact a friend of the Living Theater, who had spent part of his adolescence under the gentle guidance of Julian and Judith and the gang. He was important at Rainbow Farm because—with a little help from his parents?—he owned its 600 acres of land. He apparently enjoyed playing with a yo-yo. Lee was a middle-aged drop-out blessed with a rather unwholesome-looking gray beard, who had contributed money to the commune, one heard, to the tune of several thousand dollars. He tried always to appear full of love, but the generation barrier, the locked circle of kids, cut him off from much of the returned love he needed. Skeeter was a bit older than Garrick, about twenty-seven, and the toughest one in the commune. In some time past he had been a wrestler, and just recently at Rainbow Farm he had built a temporary corral for his horse, almost single-handedly, in a matter of six hours. It must be added that Garrick, Lee, and Skeeter were three of the hardest workers in the commune.

When Garrick and Lee returned, one day, from buying chicken feed in town, they went off conspicuously in opposite directions. Whenever they did come near each other they would trade insults, until finally they met face-to-face and remained that way. The argument grew more and more intense; it transpired that Lee had bawled out one of the town merchants; and this had happened

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before, Garrick said, because Lee showed a bad temper generally, and was deep down inside a violent person. Lee drove off his accuser alternately with kisses ("The name of the game is *love,* brother") and with accusations of his own (Garrick was irresponsible, presumably gave too much time to the yo-yo, etc.). So it went, back and forth, for a long time. "Brother, I *love* you," or "What the hell were *you* doing when I tried putting up the roofs yesterday?" And "You don't know how to *live,* man, you don't know how to fucking *live,*" or "You're a fucking forty-year-old maniac, you don't belong here." Lee kept on trying to kiss the sorrows away, but on his fifth or sixth effort, Skeeter, who evidently took the embrace as an attack on Garrick, and had evidently had something building inside him for a long time, leaped in to defend the younger one. With a terrible ferocity, letting the words ring out one by one, he said to Lee, "Lay—your—god—damned—hands—off—my—brother. You—don't touch—my—brother. Ya hear?" The message out, he shoved Lee down into the dirt and stood over him for some seconds.

By this time most of the commune was watching, and doing nothing to stop the fight. One girl, who had vacated her station in the outdoor shower, now stood contemplating the scene and betraying no particular reaction, meanwhile rubbing baby oil into her naked body. Lee was getting near to hysterics while Skeeter looked on coldly; Garrick seemed to have become suddenly rather detached. "You're on the wrong trip, brother," Lee shouted to Skeeter, when once he had got up and removed himself to a safe shouting distance. "You're using violence, that's what it is, that's all it is: violence. You're a crazy, violent bastard and you'd like to murder me." "No, you're the violent one," Garrick put in, but that didn't help any. Skeeter was already bound to react, and so he walked over to where Lee was standing and told him, in his best controlled tough-guy voice, "You *want* me to hit you, that's the only reason you keep blubbering, and if you don't shut up that's exactly what I'm gonna do. I'm gonna make you happy and give it to you right in the teeth. Just one more word and I'll do it. Just one more word." He stood there for a while, facing Lee, and then hearing no reply he walked slowly away carrying a saddle.

From near the outdoor stove came the voice of an anemic young man with a flowing beard, out of a meek but sincere effort to calm things down. "You're just reacting to each other, brothers, you're just reacting. You've got to stop reacting." This bit of advice was not followed, for when Skeeter had reached shouting distance Lee started in once again, jumping up and down as he screamed. "Violence! You're insane. You're a murderer. You're on the wrong trip, brother. This isn't violence, it's freedom, it's love. You're acting just like the outside world. I came here for freedom and now you want to kill me. I just wanna be free and all you know is violence. That isn't where it's at, brother. If you don't love me, kill me. Put me out of my misery. I'm free! Kill me!" Skeeter returned for a second time, knocked Lee down into the dirt once more, and walked off slowly. Lee went into the forest hissing and moaning to himself.

Afterwards, nobody in the commune could say just why the argument had gone on the way it did. Perhaps they had been not reacting for too long. Les, nineteen-year-old black celibate and a believer in *The Tibetan Book of the Dead,* later told Lee, "All I've got to say is, you guys are playing with something you shouldn't be playing with."

Garrick managed to get in the last word when he informed Lee of why he had not bothered to call off Skeeter, with his fists and his saddle. "I have to admit," he said, "it did look like that's what you wanted." Still . . . one wondered why things had been allowed to get so far. One wondered precisely because the (minor) violence seemed inevitable at Rainbow Farm, as it would not have seemed anywhere else. The irresistible, we learn, is often merely that which has not been

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resisted; but nobody at Rainbow Farm would have understood what this meant. Ask a few communards about "resistance," and they will tell you it means disturbing somebody else's trip. Action—of any kind—was hardly their strongest suit. The whole episode served finally to recall the words of the Czech philosopher Erazim Kohák, when he marveled at the capacity of certain young people to "lock loins where most men can at best touch fingertips." Of course, the trouble was that the communards of Rainbow farm had simply skipped ever touching finger tips. All that chanting—but did they even know each other?

It is a common misconception these days, that you can commune with the physical or metaphysical essence of someone whom you would not feel right calling by his first name: consider, for example, the phenomenon of encounter groups. At all events, I was convinced after leaving Rainbow Farm that the only people ready for the delicate project of building up a commune were those who did not perform this kind of inversion—who did not share the illusion that you can connect with a man's soul before you know his mind.

That illusion, when held not unwittingly but modishly, turns into a not wholly admirable form of self-indulgence. The large commune in Norton, Vermont, calls itself by a special name that escapes me just now: "Free Land," "Alternative Communities, Inc.," pretty soon they all blend together. Here one found no ritualized community spirit, no gathering in a circle to say premeal *mantras;* but otherwise the place was not far different from Rainbow Farm. A long-standing member of the commune told me that it had become a summer camp for rich hippies, and predicted that very few of those who remained after the summer would last through a winter in Vermont. The governor of Vermont paid a visit to Norton, and is supposed to have remarked: "They're sincere but impractical." One should add: maybe a little less than sincere. Their very newest project for raising money was thought up by the Hog Farm group, famous for causing riots wherever they go, and involves bringing over a lot of New York types—the kind that dismember Vermont barns for their Manhattan kitchens—to participate in an "ecology workshop." Cost: $10. In other words, as sociologists have let us know, "a communitarian fiction with capitalist content."

What about communes without either illusions or hypocrisy? Mostly, I would say, these exist in modest efforts like the Venice lawyers' commune, or in "intentional communes," where families live separately on commonly owned land. Modesty is perhaps the essential thing. People who say, Let us mark the beginning of the end of our mechanized plastic society, are not going to make a successful commune. People who say, Let us build up a comfortable life for ourselves —together instead of apart, have at least a chance.

Astro Commune in Vermont, which is just getting under way, was theoretically of the first kind but practically of the second. Roger, one of the three owners of the land, and the only one who spent all his time there, told me that he had originally moved to Vermont because he thought the world was going to end. But his twelve-sided house was nearing completion, and he faced an important decision: what to do with it assuming the world did not end. A number of schemes had been entertained, such as making Astro a public "alternative community" —but that would be too nebulous, or using it to house underprivileged people from New York—but that would only attract hippies. Actually, though he could expound more "purposes" than he knew what to do with, Roger was building the house simply for himself and his friends. Which was fine.

As an engineering student at MIT, Roger had been interested in radical politics. "But I discovered," he said, "that politics was a bullshit reality. The government was on a

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collision course with itself, but the real problem was competition among people, people always treating each other as objects. You know, I wanted to get out of that game." After graduating from MIT he was employed for two years "designing weapons of mass destruction": the most convenient way of evading the draft, if you happen to graduate from MIT. The difficulty of reconciling his political views with his profession at last became, for Roger, insurmountable. He bought the land and soon was into the task of building; occasional qualms about "copping out"—leaving the big city, land of big problems—were stilled by a general sense of satisfaction, of "I did the right thing." The construction at Astro went on at a terrific pace, thanks to the work of friends from MIT and, in one instance, even a snooping journalist.

Electronics were an integral part of life for the Astro workers, far more so, since these were engineering majors, than they can ever be for the ordinary dweller in a suburb. An FM station from Montreal played constantly as the well was dug, and wood was sawed and nailed. There was, however, one point of similarity between Astro and a place like Rainbow Farm. For even at Astro boredom was occasionally a felt presence, and dope was considered the surest remedy for it. And yet *serious college students*—(and I do smile when I say that)—felt that a certain guilt must attach to the repeated use of the stuff. One night everybody smoked dope, the next night someone suggested it and there were groans of "Oh no . . . not again." The sense of this could only be: we have to make it on our own, drugs won't relieve us if we fail. It would be hard to underestimate the usefulness of such inhibitions; surely the Rainbow Farm communards would have been better off for summoning them.

When I left Astro, Roger was already working as an electrician for some of his neighbors. Because they saw his seriousness they behaved decently toward him: what could be simpler? True, this was a rather unpretending seriousness, but after seeing the other kind I am sure it is the only—but why worry about "success"?—it is the only kind that will get along with the neighbors.

Now the question arises: how to go about drawing conclusions? A review of some of the literature about communes ought to help the reader set his thoughts in order, though for our purposes one book will work as well as 20. The book, then, is *Getting Back Together* by Robert Houriet,* a graduate of the Columbia School of Journalism, a practicing journalist traveling among communes, and lately the founder of his own commune in Vermont.

Early on, this author confesses to "a craving to be a free-floating observer of what I guessed might be a symbolic turning point for America," and it was this same craving, no doubt, that generated the optimistic tone which so often runs away from the evidence. Some of the depressing material is on the face of its extremely funny, although Mr. Houriet often seems only half-aware of the humor in his situations. Let me quote two of my favorite examples. Of the beginnings of a Krishna commune: "They were searching for a guru and God. But they spent too much time smoking the hookah, got dysentery, and had to return to New York." And the cool summing-up delivered by a disabused communard, speaking of her past experiences at a place called Drop City: " 'We tried a few orgies but couldn't make it as a group marriage.' " Indeed. And one could wish for more remarks like this—Mr. Houriet must have heard many—and less of the endless chronicle of day-by-day life on the communes.

" 'When we came to New Buffalo, we questioned why society had laws and customs. Now I know why and I dig it.' " Although Mr. Houriet reports several like changes of mind, his own evangelistic tem-

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* Coward, McCann & Geoghegan, 412 pp., illustrated, $7.95.

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perament stays the same. His statement that the Jesus Freaks and Krishnaites should be thought of as injecting "new wine into old wineskins" is, indeed, the very reverse of felicitous. It is old, very old wine going into new skins. Mr. Houriet rightly declares that group marriages will be hopeless until we find "a community with some objective higher than human love." Unfortunately, the tone of his book is such as to suggest that we *will* find a community like that, if only we look hard enough and long enough. I do not see how we can miss the religious element in his point of view. Mr. Houriet believes, in the end, that there is something beyond human love; and he believes that communal living, in the nature of the thing, sets us in the direction of this higher value. Myself, I would not seek further than human love; and it is not communes in general that interest me, but only this or that specific commune, and whether or not it makes life more bearable—humanly speaking.

Robert Houriet belongs to the "greening" school of social reform, but he knows that the grass will only grow through cracks in the cement. His concluding words ask parents to rediscover their children, the young people, "all members of the new community taking roots all over this, our land." There is a hail and farewell to the communards; and "their healthy, wild children," Mr. Houriet says, "they are our children." *All* our children. So Mr. Houriet looks forward to a new community of one big commune, even though the kind of purity he celebrates depends on this being a minority movement.

The purity is very well expressed in a passage from Tagore, part of which one communard recited to Mr. Houriet, though I quote it in full.

> Comrade of the road,
> Here are my traveler's greetings to thee.
> O Lord of my broken heart, of leave-taking
> and loss, of the gray silence of the dayfall,
> My greetings of the ruined house to thee!
> Sun of the everlasting day,
> My greetings of the undying hope to thee!
> My guide,
> I am a wayfarer of an endless road,
> My greetings of a wanderer to thee!

One might call this the romantic—the wanderer's—view of communal life. Let me set against it the following little poem, which I copied from the outside wall of a shack in Venice.

> I have found us 50,000
> of us lying beside our cars.
> Doors open. Our hands
> reaching out. Beggars, red-eyed
> still born.

One might call this the deromanticized or children-of-disaster view. Stillbirth or rebirth? You get the point, and of course there is no sure answer.

Observers of the communal movement sometimes have an all-embracing sympathy for the "new community," which they show in every word they speak or write. This feeling, I am afraid, is one I have not been able to share, partly because it comes out of an "oceanic sense of oneness" which seems to me unreliable, but also because my sharpest memories of communes occur as such distinct moments. Isha, a tiny four-year-old at Rainbow Farm, crying when her mother had cleansed her hurt knee but would not comfort her. Lee, in his army jacket, arguing with a Rainbow Farm tourist, being told that if you abolish law and order somebody will invent it again. Gail, a huge, friendly girl, advancing toward the house at Astro from a trail winding out of the forest, bearing in one hand a shovel, propped like a shotgun against her shoulder, and in the other a roll of yellow toilet paper. Where is there a generalization roomy enough for all this?

Like other visitors, I found the friendliness of most communards amazing by everyday standards. What one sees, looking past the friendliness, is often less reassuring. Unlike other visitors, therefore, I do not think of the movement as an automatic source of hope. Yet— I am hopeful. □

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Jesse R. Pitts

The Manson Murders: My-Lai of the Counter Culture

Ed Sanders, veteran of the disbanded rock band The Fugs—hence aristocrat of the counter culture which had for popes Allen Ginsberg and the Beatles, for king and queen in exile Timothy Leary and Bernardine Dohrn, for princes of the royal blood Paul Krassner, Jerry Rubin, Abbie Hoffman, Bob Dylan, Joan Baez, Mark Rudd —has written a book on the Manson family that will help the reader to understand the background of the Manson murders. Besides reading the book (Ed Sanders, *The Family* [New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., 1971]), I have interviewed the author, who was kind enough to give me some details not included in his book. I have read a paperback titled *The Killing of Sharon Tate,* by Lawrence Schiller, which contains a purported confession by Susan Atkins, who was Manson's number one girl. *The Family* is without literary pretensions: it is taken right off the tapes with a minimum of editing. It should be read as a document in which one can find a source for hypotheses concerning charismatic movements and the type of submission Manson was able to exace from the cohort of teen-age girls in his "family." It also gives us a better understanding of the Hollywood climate which produced many of the victims.

The public has heard only of the Tate-LaBianca murders, which had seven victims. They were preceded by the murder of Gary Hinman, a UCLA sociology graduate student, and followed by the murder of a Hollywood stunt man named Shorty Shea. These are the nine murders with which the Family has been formally charged. Sanders believes there is strong reason to ascribe six more murders to Manson and his followers, all in the year preceding their arrest in October 1969.

The motive most widely diffused by the mass media for the Sharon Tate murders is that the intended victim was Terry Melcher, the son of Doris Day and producer of her CBS show, who had supposedly reneged on a promise to make Manson into a rock star. Melcher had lived in the house on 10050 Cielo Drive until the beginning of 1969, and Manson did not know he had moved. Another version is that he knew but wanted to put a scare into Melcher. This latter reason is also mentioned in Susan Atkins's confession, but it is likely to be either irrelevant or a small part in a complex field of forces. If the police (aided by some ten private investigators financed by parents or friends of the victims) took nearly four months to break the case, it was largely because there was an abundance of clues that seemed to indicate either a financial motive—a "drug burn"—a "freak out" during a wild "fame-porn" party, or the ceremonial of an occult satanical group involving human sacrifice.

Psychopathic murders have always existed, and Hollywood is bound to have more than its share of hushed-up homicides, pedophiliac producers (cf. *The Godfather's* description of "Jack Woltz"), syndicate connections, and wild parties that wind up with someone dead or in a psychotic state.

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Hollywood is a place with an abundance of money, a maximum of ambition, a minimum of security, and little or no sense of social obligation or *noblesse oblige*. It produces a caricature of the *nouveau riche*, a place where one's status is symbolized by the size of one's "take" and the immunity from social sanctions it can buy. Decadent or marginal upper-class participants give the milieu its minimum veneer.

In the 1960s the spread of the counter culture and the availability of video tape allow underground Hollywood new scope and audacity. Growing sexual permissiveness has made some of the old precautions unnecessary and has granted immunity for trespasses whose public discovery had nearly ruined the career of a Robert Mitchum. In order to shock, to dare, one has to go well beyond the orgies *à la Citizen Kane*. Now one videotapes the party. The famous actors and actresses, the socialites who film one another copulating, fellating, sodomizing, flagellating, exchange the tapes or stills. This neutralized capacity to blackmail can be their substitute for solidarity. Sometimes the filming is public, sometimes behind a deceptive one-way mirror.

From the simple or even "kinky" pornography of sex which is getting to be stale and banal, the focus of audacity becomes the pornography of violence—that is, rage and anger and hatred, but repressed by a great fear of retribution. The pornography of violence has the same relationship toward a thoughtful and courageous assertion of one's rights that voyeurism has toward sexual potency.

The counter culture becomes, from late summer 1967 onward, more politicized and violence prone. It abandons hippie pacifism, which had taught some troubled youths to reach dignity without the use of force. The motorcycle gangs become a focus of mass-media thrills. Allen Ginsberg tries hard to make them allies of the hippies. Roger Corman features Peter Fonda in *Wild Angels*, a film depicting an orgy in a church. *Bonnie and Clyde* is an example of the pornography of violence which culminates in *M*A*S*H**, *Catch 22*, *Soldier Blue*, and *Easy Rider*. In this atmosphere the private underground movies turn to beatings, leather straps, hoods, and chains. Some have real rape and murder. "Fame-porn" sometimes gets out of hand, leads to blackmail and death. There is an international fame-porn circuit, and L'Affaire Markovitch, named after Alain Delon's second bodyguard to meet violent death, may have involved some of the Fifth Republic's greatest names. Markovitch was a great party organizer and an amateur cameraman of insufficient discretion. Some of the fame-porn movies, retailing for as high as $250,000, are bought by rich businessmen who want to impress their guests.

The pornography of violence is also evidenced in the satanical cults that seemed to flourish in the late 1960s in California. They usually limit themselves to animal sacrifices, but some apparently have made human sacrifices.

Fame-porn and the occult seemed reasonable hypotheses when the police made an inventory of the Tate house on Cielo Drive and found a substantial inventory of pornographic takes (some private and others "outtakes" from legitimate studios) belonging to Roman Polanski. At the apartment which Abigail Folger and Voityck Frykowski had been sharing for more than a year, the police also found a collection of fame-porn.

The occult connection was suggested by the writing in blood, the towel over the head of Jay Sebring (which in the writers' imagination became a hood), the rope linking Sebring and Sharon Tate; also because the murder scene looked like a Sharon Tate movie made real. The first important movie she had made, with David Niven and Deborah Kerr, was *Eye of the Devil*, "the story of a hooded religious sect which worshipped the devil and committed sacrificial mur-

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ders." Her husband's latest movie, *Rosemary's Baby,* where Mia Farrow is impregnated by the devil, had apparently displeased some of the local satanical cults. Could these five murders have been their revenge?

But the most likely explanation the police had was a "drug burn" which, over the years, had become a new and relatively common cause of beatings and executions. Jay Sebring (*né* Kummer in Detroit) was apparently a big-time drug dealer as well as a fashionable hair stylist. Abigail Folger's lover, Voityck Frykowski, was a childhood friend of Roman Polanski, and was also a drug dealer with a corner on the new drug MDA which he imported from Canada. It is conceivable that the Tate massacre was the result of revenge by an irate wholesaler who had been "burnt" by not getting delivery for his money, or who had received bad merchandise.[1] This last police hypothesis found greater support when the facts of the case were brought out in court.

Indeed, one of the first things that Charles (Tex) Watson, the leader of the murder team, said when he entered the Tate house was: "Where is the money?" It is unlikely that he meant by that the $70 Abigail Folger carried in her purse. Perhaps Manson had reasons to believe that a large sum in cash was likely to be at the house as the result of a payment or to finance the delivery of an important shipment of drugs. Anyway, the money was not there. Sanders reported that Manson may possibly have participated at the Tate house in a beating of a dealer named Billy Doyle, and recorded on video tape. This beating took place two or three days before the Tate murders. A famous movie star also supposedly had been present. In his book, Sanders merely quotes an interview given by Dennis Hopper to the *Los Angeles Free Press:* "They had fallen into sadism and masochism and bestiality—and they recorded it all on videotape too. The L.A. Police told me this. I know that three days before they were killed, twenty-five people were invited to that house to a mass whipping of a dealer from Sunset Strip who'd given bad dope." And so the police, as well as Sharon Tate's father, gave great importance to running down drug leads.

The LaBianca murders helped further to confuse the police efforts. Leno LaBianca was no ordinary Italian American produce dealer. He owned four supermarkets and also properties in California and Nevada, plus nine thoroughbred racehorses one of which had achieved national fame. He had also been on the board of the "ill-fated Hollywood National Bank." Finally his phone was tapped. Evocative, is it not? Yet evocative of a totally different type of milieu than the Tate murders. Did the killers have a "contract" on LaBianca? It is unlikely that the Mafia would use such "cooky" executioners. Sanders does not in his book allude to any participation of the LaBiancas in drug traffic, which would be the only logical link between the Tate and LaBianca murders.

The description Sanders gives of the ride in which Manson was trying to choose his victims on Saturday night, August 9, inclines one to believe the choice of the LaBianca house was made completely at random. Several times Manson stopped the car, went to investigate a possible location, only to drive on. There were two teams of killers in the car. After he had finally decided on the LaBianca house, which was next door to a house where the Manson family had participated in an acid party the year before, he crept up to the unaware couple, tied them up, and returned to the car, giving instruc-

[1] The family members have been rather contradictory in their statements. Susan Atkins reported that Manson wanted to scare Terry Melcher, but also claimed that Linda Kasabian had been "burnt" for $1000 worth of MDA she had contracted for from the occupants of 10050 Cielo Drive. Manson claims that the true reason for the murders has yet to be told, but he is not talking.

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tions to the team ("Tex" Watson, Patricia Krenwinkel, and Leslie Van Houghton). They would hitchhike back when they were finished, while Manson would drop off another team to do murder: the 17-year-old Steve Grogan, also known as "Clem," Susan Atkins, and Linda Kasabian. They too would hitch a ride back to the Spahn ranch, where Manson would be waiting for them. The second team, after some desultory motions toward locating a Lebanese actor who had picked up Linda Kasabian ten days before, aborted the mission.

Meanwhile, the first murder team did kill the LaBiancas by knifing them more than 70 times. Tex scratched the word "war" on Leno LaBianca's stomach. They wrote "Death to Pigs" on a tapestry, "Rise" on the wall, and "Healter Skelter" [*sic*] on the doors of the refrigerator, all in the blood of their victims. Tex left a knife in the throat of Leno LaBianca; Patricia Krenwinkel struck a carving fork in his belly about seven times and left it twanging in one final stroke. Then they ate what they found in the refrigerator and drank some chocolate milk. This was the meal in the midst of the corpses that aroused the enthusiasm of Bernardine Dohrn,[2] showing the coolness and detachment of these politically unformed but instinctual militants of the class struggle: a model for University of Chicago or Columbia University Weathermen still hung-up on bourgeois respectability at a time when Bernardine wanted them to start bomb terrorism.

Yet Bernardine Dohrn's analysis comes closer to the truth of the Tate-LaBianca murders than she even suspected. For in the summer of 1969 Manson thought the time had come for the final apocalypse, of which he and the Beatles were the annunciators. Manson would provide the trigger: by committing atrocious crimes and laying them at the door of the Black Panthers,[3] the Manson Family would trigger a murderous white backlash that would in turn result in a black uprising. The blacks would overthrow the white Establishment so thoroughly hated by Manson, and, afterwards, would turn over their power to him. This was "Helter Skelter," as Manson interpreted the Beatle song of that title, indulging in the exegesis of the Beatles so fashionable in 1968–69.

If Sanders tends to stress Manson's fear of the Panthers and the implicit racism of his doctrine that lets the blacks do the dirty work of the revolution before passing command to him, Susan Atkins, in her published "confession," declares that Manson "dug blacks" because of his long prison experience. He had learned in prison of their secret arms caches, and it was because of their "super-awareness" that they would recognize Manson as the leader.

While the civil war was raging, Manson and his followers would take shelter in the Hole in Death Valley, a combination of Hopi lore and long-standing rumors about underground caves full of everything that Nature had denied to the desert. From the amiable imitator of Ken Kesey and his Merry Pranksters, traveling up and down the coast with his followers in a converted school bus—and sometimes getting into trouble with the police for letting them cavort in the nude—Manson had become the leader of a millennarian cult, preaching salvation for those who would join him before the Apocalypse started. His followers had become trained for instant obedience, ready to commit murder at their master's command. How did that happen? Who was Manson? How did he obtain such power over his followers?

[2] In a speech given at the Flint, Mich., 1969 SDS conference, as reported in *Weatherman*, Harold Jacobs, ed. (Berkeley: Ramparts Press, 1970): "Dig it, first they killed those pigs, then they ate dinner in the same room with them, then they even shoved a fork into a victim's stomach. Wild!"

[3] In the Hinman murder, which began the series in July 1969, the killers had drawn a panther's paw in blood to mislead the public into believing blacks committed the murder. The use of the word Pig was also supposed to be a clue, since the Panthers' rhetoric had heavily emphasized the animal: "We're going to barbecue us some pork"; "Kill the Pigs"; etc.

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Manson was born in 1934, apparently the illegitimate son of a 17-year-old girl who later married a Mr. Manson, who gave his name to the child. His mother was arrested for robbery when he was about nine years old. Since the age of 13 in various institutions, he entered prison at 16. At 21 he married a 17-year-old who divorced him two years afterwards, after giving birth to a child who would be 16 years old by now.[4] Manson's specialty was car theft.

Most of Manson's adult life was spent in prison. What he learned there before 1958 was the art of the pimp. When he got out in 1958 he tried to organize a stable of girls, and also tried his hand at stealing and forging checks. In 1960 he was finally given a ten-year sentence, largely thanks to the efforts of an insurance investigator whose daughter had been "turned out" by Manson.

Manson seems to have been obsessed by a need to control others. In the '50s he was an avid listener to pimps describing their methods for controlling their girls. In the '60s he became fascinated with subliminal advertising, and he tried it once he had secured a position on the prison radio staff. He became involved in the occult and scientology, black magic, and derived much inspiration from Robert Heinlein's *Stranger in a Strange Land*. He could also quote extensively from the Bible. He became a great Beatle fan and, in his first attempt to prepare himself for a legitimate career in the straight world, he learned to play the guitar and practiced singing extensively. When *paroled* in 1967, he came to the Berkeley–San Francisco scene with his guitar. He had many assets for success: a musical talent above average, knowledge of occult and hip books, a sexual staying power well above average, and the fact that he was an ex-convict, "victim of society." He was older than the average hippie, although at first most of the girls he met thought he was in his middle or late twenties. He began recruiting female followers among the hippies: Mary Brunner, a University of Wisconsin graduate; Patricia Krenwinkel, dropout from a small Catholic college in Alabama; and Susan Atkins, 19-year-old daughter of a bankrupt appliance salesman. At 18, Susan, after the death of her mother, had dropped out of high school and left home. After trying suicide she had become involved with two boys who stole cars and robbed gas stations. She was arrested, released on probation, and eventually wound up sharing a pad on Haight-Ashbury with some girls. The three of them joined the Manson bus in the summer of 1967.

Most of the Manson followers were young girls aged 14 and above. Men (more often teen-age boys) were fewer, one for every four girls or so. Of those for whom there is some biographical information it can be said that they came mostly from petty-bourgeois backgrounds with a smattering of Hollywood children and some upper-middle-class girls such as Cathy Meyers, granddaughter of the owners of the Meyers ranch in Death Valley where the Family took refuge for a few days in September 1969, before settling at the nearby Barker ranch.[5] Sandy Good was the daughter of a stockbroker. Kitty Lutesinger and Stephanie Schram were daughters of local ranchers, not culturally upper-middle, but certainly financially well-off. (Manson was very proud of Stephanie, whom he had picked up on his return from the Esalen Institute the weekend before the Tate-LaBianca murders. He called her "the product of two thousand years of breeding.")

The Manson Family was probably a good example of the teen-age runaways that swamped the hippie movement in 1967–68, just as Manson and his friend Bill Vance, of

[4] This son was apparently shot to death in a brawl in January 1972.

[5] At the Barker ranch the Family finally was captured in two raids following complaints by local miners and because they had burnt a $30,000 Clark skip-loader that belonged to the Park Rangers. With a minimum of discretion, the Family could have escaped detection for many months in the wilds of Death Valley.

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convict days, were examples (rather extreme, no doubt) of those psychopathic adults who fattened on this new prey. It was not usually a planned, cynical exploitation; rather, these runaways provided some commune boss with an easily seduced and cowed following.

Although many of these runaways were from broken or destructive homes, there were others for whom running away was merely a hip lark. There was no fear of starvation, for the youth society took care of its own. Being versed in the counter culture was no vaccination against Manson's appeal: Diane (Snake) Bluestein had been living on the famous Hog Farm commune with her parents before becoming a devotee who was to stick with Manson even after his arrest and exposure. Linda Kasabian had been living with her hippie husband on various communes before joining Manson. Joining the Family was actually a way to make the grade in the counter culture. It was probably better than being a "groupie" for a second-rate rock band, but sometimes not terribly different in experience.

In the beginning Manson did not claim to be Jesus. He merely said that he and his band were what Jesus and his apostles must have been all about—young, sensual, carefree, loving, sharing—before Establishment scribes got hold of the story. Manson was very much against killing animals, even snakes, and he once threatened with death a member of the Family who had shot a rattlesnake. In 1967 Manson seemed to have convinced two convict friends—one a first-rate forger who made various items for the Family—to turn over their guns to him, which he dropped into the sea from the Golden Gate Bridge. When new members joined, Manson would change their names. His followers did the same for him, calling him The Soul, or Jesus. In 1969 he was also The Devil ("Let me speak to the Devil," Clem Brogan said when he called the Spahn ranch to warn Manson of the first Barker ranch bust). Manson let himself be called these names, and he insisted he never told anyone to do something they did not want to do themselves. In accord with the counter culture's solipsistic notion that the sole reference or reward of action is the pleasure of the actor, no one is responsible for or to anyone. Thus Manson at his trial could deny any responsibility for the Tate murders. Since there are no leaders, everyone did his own thing, and he could not be accountable for what the other Family members did.

Manson was also admired as a "now" person, living without thought for the consequences of his actions. When there was money in the Family (at times thousands of dollars were floating about) they spent it wantonly, buying all sorts of musical instruments and wrecking or abandoning them. This demonstrated Manson to be above the contingencies of life, a truly free man.

He was also very much into the cult of the child, a mainstay of the counter culture which deems the child to be an equivalent of the noble savage—human nature uncorrupted by the system. He wanted the Family to have children and discouraged the use of birth control.

It was in his view of women that Manson was most vulnerable from a counter culture standpoint. In his cosmology women were inferior creatures who should obey men—that is, the redempted men who followed Manson. All other men were weak and actually dominated by women, which was against the cosmic order. In the millennarian world of the Hole, women would be subject to strong men. Meanwhile, the Family girls would say: "He's not our leader, he falls down at our feet. But he doesn't let us step on him"; and Sanders adds: "If they did, he'd punch them in the face." This was part of the panoply of gestures, such as mutual kissing of feet, the exchange of submission that made up the Aesopian language of the Family. It would permit the girls to deny that Manson was a "sexist," just as

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some lovers of democracy become enmeshed in totalitarian movements and do not see or want to see the contradiction.

The Family was in principle vegetarian and would supply itself—even in the days when money was floating about—by "garbage runs" to the supermarkets, where they would pick up food discarded because it was spotted or not fresh enough. When four girls in short-short mini skirts did the garbage run, the stock boys were likely to be generous.

Manson had some musical talent and he was given some breaks. In November 1967 he recorded for Universal Studios. Universal also employed him as technical adviser on a Jesus film eventually killed by the front office. To people like Terry Melcher or Dennis Wilson of the Beach Boys, who made enormous amounts of money out of cheap art, Manson was their wild fantasy, their remorse. They must have felt guilty over the Family of flower children, and tried to expiate their remorse by admiration and doing him favors. After the bus adventure was over, the Family stayed in various places. There was always room for the Manson Family, with its young and uninhibited girls. Eventually the Family wound up at Dennis Wilson's three-acre estate on Sunset Boulevard, from which the girls would go on garbage runs in Wilson's Rolls-Royce. After they had given away Wilson's clothes, his collection of gold records, his agent managed to get the Family out of the house. This did not prevent the Beach Boys from issuing one of Manson's songs, after giving it their syrupy treatment (from "Cease to Exist," its title was changed to "Never Learn Not to Love"). They intended to issue a whole album of his songs. They tried to get Rudy Altobelli, owner of the house on 10050 Cielo Drive, and landlord of Terry Melcher, to take on Manson as a client. "A successful show business talent manager," as Sanders describes him, Altobelli declined.

If Manson had been able to play the Hollywood game and had agreed to turn on the charm in Hollywood fashion, he might have made a successful career in show business. The prison had been a simple structure in which to orient himself. The outside world proved too complex. Although he had these successful "friends," always boosting his talent, very little seems to have come out of their efforts, either because Manson was not hard-working enough or their efforts on his behalf were desultory. He went to Hollywood parties, probably was on first-name terms with movie stars who would now rather forget him. A millionairess, daughter-in-law of a famous Washington hostess, used him to spend part of her divorce settlement. She bought him a red Cadillac, which he returned because he did not like the color.

Manson was not indifferent to status, no more than a bluenose is to sex; his remark about Stephanie Schram being the product of 2,000 years of breeding shows it well. He was unable to join the world of entertainment, yet was unable to leave it. After being thrown out of Dennis Wilson's house, it is likely that his dependency upon the Family grew to psychotic proportions, with a background of anger and hatred for those who had rejected him. From the Wilson estate the Family moved to the Spahn Ranch, an old movie set ranch on the outskirts of Los Angeles.

Sanders believes that the conversion of Manson to violence was largely determined by the influence of the satanical cults, especially one which had recently emigrated from England: "an . . . occult society dedicated to observing and aiding the end of the world by stirring up murder, violence and chaos, and dedicated to the proposition that they . . . shall survive the gore as the chosen people."

The biker clubs were the transmission belt of the satanical cults to the Manson Family. They visited the Spahn ranch, and Manson tried to attach them to his retinue by providing them with the free sexual services of his girls.

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The influence of the satanical cults may have been real. Nevertheless, during 1968 the counter culture itself became more violent. This was the period when there were frequent riots in the black ghettos of major cities. The aborted revolution of May 1968 in France, the Columbia University sit-ins, the Cleveland shoot-out in July, the Chicago Democratic Convention—all gave many people in the movement the belief that the revolution, sparked by the blacks and the students, was close at hand. Tough anti-Establishment talk became the thing among the teeny-boppers.

In the winter of 1968–69 Manson, guided by Beatle mysticism—a search for occult and esoteric meanings in the Beatle songs: "Revelation 9," "Piggie," "Happiness Is a Warm Gun," "Helter Skelter"—developed his own scenario of Apocalypse. "Revelation 9" was a reference to the ninth book of Revelations; the Beatles were the four angels of the Apocalypse, to whom would be added Manson as angel of the bottomless pit. Sanders says: "One of Manson's favorite passages from Revelation 9 was: 'Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts'—words that he would quote over and over again, preparing his worshippers to kill." In the Beatle records he imagined special messages for himself alone.

Manson had remained pretty well "together" for about 15 months following his release from prison. He had abstained from criminality beyond what was accepted by the counter culture as a justified rip-off on the Establishment. The hippie culture had oriented him to paths where his psychotic imaginings were accepted and did not lead to aberrant behavior. Now the counter culture's turn toward violence unleashed a man who could not tell the difference between reality and fantasy. His band of worshippers screened him from any effective confrontation with reality. They believed he could make miracles, levitate trucks over obstacles in the road. They would spend hours singing, lovemaking, turning on acid, and proselytizing. With an average population of about 25, probably close to a 100 people must have gone through the Family in the nearly two-and-a-half years of its existence. The Spahn ranch became a crash pad for runaways. Some stayed, most left when the servile condition of the Family became apparent. About half the "old guard" from the days of flower power remained for the bloodshed of "Helter Skelter."

Teen-agers are often caught between the conflicting desires to be taken seriously, to imitate adults, but to benefit from a moratorium as to the consequences of their action. To the teeny-bopper Manson offered two experiences normally connected with adult life: sex and violence. Manson used to say he was the "King of Fuck," and apparently he was. A sexual party with him was something different from a grope with a teen-age boy. It was different, grown up.

Violence was also a hip thing in 1968–69, an act which put the middle-class adolescent above the common crowd. Violence means putting yourself on the line. In some ways it strengthens the sense of identity. For the girls, to participate in violence was to deny traditional role limitations, a chance to show they cared for their leader. Most of the Manson followers were content with the smell of violence rather than the real thing, just as most Communists were quite satisfied with the smell of conspiracy rather than a real one. But the biker atmosphere, the tough talk about "offing pigs," the whispers of murder, must have been quite heady to the teen-agers, especially the teen-age girl, whose sexual partners became infused with the virility of violence.

There was also the constant filming of activities, orgies, perhaps even murders. Filming was a status symbol, and a way of denying the reality of what one is filming or acting. One can enjoy the scene and yet be no more responsible for it than an actor.[6]

[6] Films can also be a source of blackmail. At the present time most of the Manson movies are re-

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On a deeper level Manson had a few psychological tricks he used to convert people on the fringe of the movement. Many of the runaways girls may have had fixations on their fathers that were close to the surface of their consciousness (often a more common reason for running away than parental "cruelty"). When Manson would give them his psychiatric diagnosis that they had a sexual hang-up on their father, it was likely on one level or another to be true (what else is new . . .). In initiating intercourse he would ask the girls to imagine that he was their father; and often he would make them take acid at the same time, the drug usually being an effective way to decrease temporarily the organizing and judgmental functions of the ego. Thereby Manson, not on acid, could take over these functions from his followers.

Manson would thus ask these girls vicariously to commit with him the crime of "incest," which, for middle-class girls, is the worst crime imaginable. Yet at the same time that they were committing it, they were not. Again we have the theme of acting for the movie of the mind—while they were committing incest they were forgiven, but on condition of transferring their superego to Manson. He became the sole judge of what was right and wrong.[7] Nothing was shameful in what he ordained. If the girls were ordered to perform sexual acts with some unknown, sweaty, beery biker, they did it immediately. The more the order went against their pre-Manson conscience the more worthy they became by obeying it, thereby testifying to their complete trust in and surrender to the leader.

Murder, when commanded by the master, and murder by knife—which is probably among the most difficult—became easy for some. If they were willing to die for Manson, they were also willing to kill for him. Manson's soul was their soul. They had given up their ego (a typical counter culture theme which usually meant "be unselfish"). In a sense they had died so as to be able to be reborn in the Hole after Helter Skelter.

More commonly Manson let himself be loved, and the girls wanted to love. They used to say to other men who might be hassling them for sex or attention: "I don't care or know about you, I've got my own love for me."

For some girls the experience of the Family must have been therapeutic, perhaps helping more girls than it led to murder. Susan Atkins said it well: "He gave my faith in myself back to me." Self-confidence, even when given back by a Manson, can be the first step toward an integrated self, which then can be a better judge of what is really happening and can leave the cult. All millennarian cults, which insist upon the special quality of the saved, tend to have a high turnover of members. A major reason is their capacity to cure the member of the very estrangement from self and society that led to membership in the first place.

With young men, Manson had another technique which seems to have been effective, at least in "blowing their minds." He would give them a knife and say: "Go ahead and kill me," gaining the ascendancy over them of not being afraid to put his life on the line. The failure of the other to kill Manson became a sign of lack of conviction, lack of direction, lack of guts. He would take back the knife and say: "Then, I can kill you"—that is, you belong to me and must obey me, under penalty of death;

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ported to be in the hands of ex-convict Bill Vance, a member of the Family who is being tracked down by the FBI.

[7] Manson had a "hang up" on skinny redheads who reminded him of his mother. In 1967 when the Family was living on the bus, they went searching for his mother all over the West Coast—in vain. One may suppose that encouraging the girls to commit "incest" with him was a transposition of his own wish to commit incest with his mother. Ambivalence was a constant theme of Manson's fantasies and behavior, as well as in the Family. Love-hate, murder and feet-kissing, or preoccupation that the victims should not leave this earth with panic on their minds (LaBianca murders), love and beating up, are all symptoms of an ego incapable of lasting integration. His followers could use their leader as a way of integrating themselves, but Manson could not use his followers as effectively for his own relief.

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you live by my permission. This psychological trick, perhaps learned in prison, was effective in some cases. In other cases, probably in most, the member or might-be member must have picked up his pack and taken the first ride out. Until the bloody summer of 1969 there does not seem to have been much coercion about joining or not joining the Family. Afterwards, Manson threatened with death those who might leave, because they knew too much.

What is to be done?

There is little doubt that at this very minute some runaways are being victimized by Manson types, perhaps minus the murders. A close approximation might be the few communes that are into political violence, mostly bombings, perhaps mayhem, and who finance their operations through rip-offs and drug trafficking. Today the climate is once more against violence, and if Manson had escaped arrest the Family might now be touring the country playing *Jesus Christ Super-Star*. A network of Youth Centers, directed by hip mental-health specialists who often get their money from the Community Funds, is able to provide crash pads away from the Spahn ranches. Running away is not as "in" for middle-class teen-agers as it used to be.

Effective cures for the social problem of the runaway are not easily conjured out of the liberal conscience. The basic problem is that the burdens placed upon the isolated nuclear family by the meritocracy are probably excessive. The children grow without any other adult reference than their two parents, which creates a great deal of dependency and vulnerability in the parent-child relationship. On the other hand, the society presses a value system in which individual achievement and autonomy are supreme. One might think that a stronger extended family could prevent runaways. Yet we may find, just as in the student movement, that an amazing amount of action is accounted for by fashion rather than by the "heavy" explanations of the social scientist.

One approach might be to improve the police and make it into a thoroughly professionalized system, but this, of course, is not going to be easy. The weight of the mass media and of much of the intellectual establishment is toward a weakening of the mechanisms of social control, rather than toward their strengthening. Prisons have been delegitimated. Why should Manson's parole officer send him back to jail because some girl claims she has been raped?[8] Prisons are seen as schools of crime, dehumanizing, etc. But the fact is, given our lack of knowledge about effective rehabilitative measures, a certain number of criminals will have to be kept in a custodial system for the safety of the public, and for their own. Liberal opinion is against punishment. To be logical, then, most murderers—who are "spontaneous" criminals rather than armed robbers or Manson types—should never be placed in prison. Their recidivism rate is very low—even though they spend the most time in the schools for crime that prisons are supposed to be. Then why not let them go the day after the murder of passion has been committed? As a matter of fact, an increasing number of murderers are placed on probation rather than being sent to jail. What this policy forgets is that the role of punishment is not to rehabilitate the culprit but to reinforce, through symbolization, the strength of the transgressed value in the minds of the still innocent public.

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[8] Manson was arrested four times, between March 30 and August 23, 1969 (the Tate-LaBianca murders took place on August 9 and 10) on charges varying from rape to auto theft to possession of marijuana. Every time he was released for insufficient evidence, or the complaint was withdrawn, as in the case of the rape charge. After beating the marijuana charge he organized on August 27 the beheading murder of "Shorty" Shea, a regular hand on the Spahn ranch, who had been trying to pressure his boss to get rid of the Family, and whom Manson suspected of having organized with the police his arrest on the marijunana charge.

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The therapeutic approach, unless it substitutes the stigma of sick for the stigma of criminal, is read by persons closest in social space to the culprit either as a reward for deviance or as a denial that society really "means it." Under these conditions continued increases in the homicide rate must be expected. To those who believe that rational calculations of the likelihood of punishment are irrelevant to crimes of passion, I can only give as a rebuttal the experience of the mental hospitals. Patients may be psychotic, but they know—in the mist of their delirium—that hitting the doctor is more dangerous than hitting the attendant. If you hit the attendant he may hit you back; if you hit the doctor you are likely to be labeled "homicidal" (no more passes to the grounds, no more privileges of any sort) and diagnosed as a schizophrenic, paranoid type. You will not get out so quickly.

Another suggestion, derived from examining the police procedures in the Manson case, is that the Supreme Court of each state should create a special Lie Detector Commission under its direct control, and that the prosecuting attorney may ask the court to make the lie detector test mandatory for suspects in crimes of violence, such as homicide, rape, child abuse. At the present time and in view of the laws regarding the admissibility of evidence, the police and the prosecuting attorney are frequently led, in their prosecution of a known criminal, to perjury, the use of stool pigeons, undercover deals with the defense attorney, which in their totality are probably more dangerous to civil rights than the controlled use of the lie detector. The Supreme Courts would see to it that the professional standards (effectiveness, confidentiality) of the lie detector machinery would be improved and safeguarded. It would not be a panacea, but it would increase the likelihood that those who challenge by their acts of violence the inviolability of the human person—which is after all one of our most important values and a keystone of the democratic system of government—would be punished.[9]

On a talk show Ed Sanders was asked, "How do you prevent things like Manson?" His answer was, "Don't let anybody tell you what to do." This is the advice that our Puritan fathers have always given us. They did not mean, of course, "do your thing," but rather "Follow the Law, given to us by God, and obey it regardless of the temptations of the flesh, the seduction of the crowd, and the commands of false idols." For us, humanists of the Judeo-Puritan tradition, the Law is first *our responsibility to the widest possible human collectivity,* rather than to the exclusive community of the saved. Second, it is *the commitment to rationality,* universalistic and disciplined; rationality means the acceptance of uncertainty, the search for truth, but never the certainty of salvation or truth. It means bearing the responsibilities of fallible human justice rather than escaping them in the effusions of universal guilt, which is the mask of universal innocence.

The counter culture, in its desperate search for love and salvation, makes its crucial mistake in believing that revelation is the sole road to truth. In the better cases it is a return to the antinomianism of Anne Hutchinson. In the worse cases the individual is left defenseless against the commands of the savior he loves, whether it be Hitler, Stalin, or the Manson of death.

Meanwhile, what of the night? If the lonely cry out, let us try to reach them first, before monsters are born from their fears. □

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[9] Preliminary results of research in a large Midwestern city show the likelihood of a murderer being arrested and sent to jail to be one out of three. Except in cases of armed-robbery murder he is unlikely to remain in prison for more than two or three years—not too high a price to pay for a "rep" that will be of great help in street life.

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Vasily Grossman

Executioners and Victims

Excerpts from a Russian Novel

Vasily Grossman (1905–64) was a Russian writer who grew up during the years of the Stalin terror. Like many other Russian writers of the time, he was neither a heroic opponent nor a political sycophant; he tried to survive those terrible years as best he could, keeping silent when he had to, and meanwhile storing up his own ideas and impressions. In the postwar years he suffered attack as a "homeless cosmopolite." According to a report that came from the distinguished Russian writer Konstantin Paustovsky to a friend in the West, Grossman wrote a novel Paustovsky considered a masterpiece; it was confiscated by the secret police and no copies remained. In his last years Grossman worked on a novel, now published in the U.S. by Harper & Row under the title Forever Flowing, *which constitutes a political-moral testament. It is a deep-going criticism of the entire totalitarian society and outlook; it contains a serious attack on the tradition of Leninism; and its outlook is that of a "Westerner" attached to the values of liberalism and social democracy.*

We print below two excerpts from "Forever Flowing." *The first consists of an imaginary trial in which the informers who in earlier years had sent endless numbers of people to the camps in Siberia are now being arraigned. The second consists of a chapter in which the central character, Ivan Grigoryevich, a broken man after three decades spent as a prisoner in the camps, recalls an especially critical moment of his past.*—ED.

I

PROSECUTOR: You confirm the fact that you wrote denunciations against Soviet citizens?

THE INFORMERS: Yes, in a way.

PROSECUTOR: Do you admit you are guilty of the deaths of innocent Soviet citizens?

INFORMERS: No, we categorically deny it. The state had foredoomed those people to death, and our work, so to speak, was concerned only with the superficial framework. In essence, no matter what and how we wrote, whether we accused these people or declared them innocent, these people were foredoomed by the state.

PROSECUTOR: But sometimes you wrote denunciations on your own. In such cases you yourselves picked the victim.

INFORMERS: That was just an apparent freedom of choice. People were destroyed in accordance with statistical methods, and the people scheduled for destruction belonged only to particular social and ideological strata. We knew these parameters. And, after all, you knew them too. We never informed against people who belonged to healthy strata that were not subject to destruction.

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PROSECUTOR: To speak in terms of the Gospels: push those who are falling. However, there were cases, even in that harsh time, when the state acquitted people who had been slandered.

DEFENSE COUNSEL: Yes, such cases actually did occur—as the result of a mistake. But, after all, only God makes no mistakes. Yes, and you can remember how rare the acquittals were; what that means is that mistakes were rare too.

PROSECUTOR: Yes, you informers knew your business. But nonetheless, answer me: why did you inform?

INFORMERS *(speaking in turn):* They forced me. They beat me. . . . I was hypnotized by fright, by the power of boundless violence. . . . I was carrying out my Party duty as it was understoood at the time.

PROSECUTOR: And what about you, Comrade Number Four, why are you silent?

JUDAS THE FOURTH: Why are you picking on me? I am not very bright or well-educated. It is much easier for you to cast aspersions on me than on people who are educated and smart politically.

DEFENSE COUNSEL *(interrupting):* Permit me to make a clarification here. My client really did produce denunciations in pursuit of his personal aims. However, please take into consideration that his personal interests ran parallel to those of the state. The state did not reject the information provided by my client, and, consequently, it appears that he performed a useful function for the state, although at a first and superficial glance it might seem that he really produced denunciations out of selfish, personal considerations only. Here is the heart of the matter. In Stalin's time you yourself, Comrade Prosecutor, would have been charged with failure to value the role of the state highly enough. Do you realize that the powerful magnetic field created by our state, that its mass, with a weight of trillions of tons, and the superfear and supersubmissiveness which it induces in the human speck of dust are such as to make ridiculous any and every charge directed against a weak and defenseless individual human being? It is absurd to condemn a bit of fluff for having fallen to earth.

PROSECUTOR: Your view is plain: you do not choose to have your clients assume even the slightest trace of guilt. The state alone bears all the guilt. But tell me, informers, do not you yourselves, at least in some measure, admit to being guilty?

INFORMERS *(exchanging looks and whispering, whereupon the well-educated informer among them takes the floor on their behalf):* Let me reply. Your question, for all its seeming surface simplicity, is by no means so simple. First of all, it is meaningless, but that, as it happens, is of no significance. In actuality, why seek out now those guilty of crimes committed in the Stalinist era? That is like emigrating from the earth to the moon, and then bringing suit over a question of land boundaries on earth. On the other hand, if one considers that these epochs are not really so far distant from one another, and, as the poet said, in terms of historical ages, they stand virtually beside each other, then there arise many other complications. Why are you determined to expose particularly those like us who are weak? Begin with the state. Try *it!* After all, our sin is its sin. Pass judgment on *it*. Fearlessly, out in the open, out loud. You have no alternative, in view of how fearlessly you are speaking out on behalf of truth and justice. Well, get on with it! Act! And then explain one other thing, if you please. Why have you waited until now? You knew us all in Stalin's lifetime. You used to greet us cordially then and wait to be received at the doors of our offices, and sometimes while you waited you used to whisper about us in a birdlike voice. Well, we, too, whispered in birdlike voices. You, like us, were a participant in the Stalin era. Why should you, who were a participant, pass judgment on us, who were participants, and assess our guilt? Do you understand wherein the complexity lies? Perhaps we are guilty, but there is no

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judge who has a moral right to raise the question of our guilt. Recall the words of Lev Tolstoy: there are no guilty people in the world! But here, in our state, there is a new formula: the whole world is guilty, and no one is innocent. What is in question is solely the degree, the measure of guilt. You have undertaken, Comrade Prosecutor, to bring charges against us. Only those who did not survive have the right to pass judgment on us. But dead men ask no questions and tell no tales. They are silent. So let us answer your question with another question. Man to man, human to human, straight and simple, in the Russian way. Wherein lies the cause of this universal, foul, unanimous weakness, submissiveness and compliancy, yours and ours?

PROSECUTOR: You are evading the question. *(The secretary enters and hands the well-educated police informer a document, saying: "From the government.")*

THE WELL-EDUCATED INFORMER *(after reading the paper):* I beg you: in connection with my sixtieth birthday my more than modest achievements in the field of Russian science have been honored.

PROSECUTOR *(reading the document):* Even against my will, I cannot but be glad for you —for after all we are all Soviet people.

THE WELL-EDUCATED INFORMER: Yes, yes, naturally, thank you. *(He mutters to himself:)* Permit me through the columns of your newspaper to thank . . . the institutions, the organizations, and also the comrades and friends . . . who have sent congratulations. . . .

THE DEFENSE COUNSEL *(strikes a pose and makes a speech):* Comrade Prosceutor, and you, honored jurors! The comrade prosecutor told my client that he had evaded replying when he asked wherein lies the cause of our general, universal, unanimous submissiveness and compliancy. Perhaps it was human nature itself that produced stool pigeons, police informers, slanderers. Perhaps they derive from the secretions of internal glands, or the squelching of liquids in the intestine, or the rumble of digestive gases, or the mucous membranes, or the activity of the kidneys, or perhaps they arise from the blind instincts of food-seeking, self-preservation, propagation.

Well now, isn't it really immaterial whether stool pigeons are guilty or not? So they are to blame, so they are not to blame. So what! The thing that is loathsome, repulsive, is the fact that they exist. The entire animal, vegetable, mineral, physiochemical side of the human being is loathsome, repulsive. Because of that slimy, hairy, lower element of the human essence, stoolies come into being. Stool pigeons are born of human beings. The hot breath of fear of the state breathed upon mankind, and the slumbering seeds swelled and burst open. The state is the soil, the earth. And if the seeds were not hidden within the earth, neither wheat nor weeds would rise from it. The human being has only himself to thank for human dregs.

But do you realize the most loathsome thing about stool pigeons and informers? Do you think it is the evil that is in them?

No, not at all; the most awful thing is the good that is in them, the saddest thing of all is that they are replete with virtue, that they do good deeds.

They are loving, tender sons, fathers, husbands. They are quite capable of great achievements in doing good and getting work accomplished.

They love science, and our great Russian literature, and beautiful music, and some of them are equipped to express opinions on the most complex phenomena of contemporary philology and art.

And what devoted, loyal, good friends are to be found among them, and how considerately they visit a comrade who has had to go into the hospital!

What brave and patient soldiers are to be found among them! They shared their last crusts with their comrades, their last pinch of makhorka, and they took in their arms and carried off the battlefield fellow soldiers who were wounded and bleeding.

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And what talented poets are to be found among them, and musicians, and physicists, and what talented lathe operators, too, and carpenters, the kind of whom people exclaim with delight: "Golden hands!"

Now that is what is really awful: the fact that there is so much good in them, in their human essence.

Who, then, is to be judged? Human nature! It gives birth to these piles of falsehood, vileness, cowardice, weakness. But it gives birth, too, to the good, the pure, the kind. The informers and the stool pigeons are replete with virtue; let them return to their homes; but how detestable they are with all their virtues, even with the complete remission of sins. Who was it who made that well-known bad joke: "Man, proud is thy name"?

Yes, yes, they are not guilty, they were forced to it by grim, gloomy, leaden forces, and trillions of tons of pressure were put upon them, and among the living there is no one who is innocent. All are guilty, including you, Comrade Prosecutor, and you, defendant, and I, who am considering the defendant, the prosecutor, and the judge.

But how shamed and how pained we must remain, face to face with our human indecency, unworthiness, obscenity!

II

He was all alone in the room, and he was carrying on an imaginary conversation with Anna Sergeyevna. He was talking to her inside his head, and here is what he said to her:

I want you to realize that at the most difficult times of all I used to imagine a woman's embraces and think how wonderful they would be. I thought I could find oblivion in them and be able to forget what I had suffered, and I would feel as though none of the pain had ever happened. But as it turned out, you see, I felt the need of telling you, you in particular, about all of it. And you yourself spent that whole night talking, telling me your story. What has happened, you see, is that it makes us happy to share with each other the burden we share with no one else. When you come home from the hospital, I will tell you about the hour that was the worst of all for me. It was a conversation in a prison cell, at dawn, after I had been interrogated.

The man next to me was named Alexei Samoilovich. He died soon after. I think he was the most intelligent of all the men I ran into. But his mind was frightening. Not because it was evil, you understand, for evil in itself is not frightening. And, for that matter, he did not have an evil mind, but only a mind indifferent to and derisive of faith. He frightened me, he exerted a very strong gravitational force on me. And he refused to accept my faith in freedom.

His life had worked out badly. But it was a life like many others there. He was imprisoned under Section 58-10, the most common of all sections.

He had a powerful brain. His thought would bear me along like a wave, and I used to shudder as a beach might shudder when a wave crashes.

I was brought back to my cell after being interrogated. What a list one could make of the techniques of violence employed throughout history: burning at the stake, prison, and now the new technology of annihilation! Tall and enormous prison fortresses, as large as fair-sized cities, and, of course, camps. Capital punishment began with an oak club crushing the skull, with a rope noose. But today the executioner just turns on the meat grinder

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and executes a hundred, a thousand, ten thousand people. He no longer even has to swing his ax. Our century is the century of the greatest violence ever committed against the human being by the state. But it is precisely here that the strength and hope of mankind lie. It is the twentieth century that has at last shaken the Hegelian concept of the historical process: "Everything real is rational." It was this concept, violently debated for decades, that Russian thinkers of the past century finally accepted.

But now, at the height of the state's triumph over individual freedom, Russian thinkers wearing padded camp jackets have dethroned and cast down the old Hegelian law and have proclaimed their new, supreme, guiding principle of world history:

"Everything inhuman is senseless and worthless."

Yes, indeed! Amidst the total triumph of inhumanity, it has become self-evident that everything effected by violence is senseless and worthless, and that it has no future and will disappear without a trace.

This is my faith, and with it I would return to my cell after an interrogation. And my bunkmate would usually say to me:

"Why defend freedom? Long ago, people saw in it the law and the meaning of progress. And now, they say, everything is clear: there is no such thing as historical development. History is a molecular process. The human being is equal to himself. Nothing can be done with him. There is no progress. And the law in all this is very simple—the law of the conservation of violence. It is as simple as the law of the conservation of energy. Violence is eternal, no matter what is done to destroy it. It will not disappear and it will not diminish but will only be transformed. It once took the form of slavery. Then of the Mongol invasion. It moves from continent to continent, and sometimes it takes a class form and then is transformed into a racial form. From the material sphere it slips into medieval religiosity. Sometimes it is exercised against the colored races, sometimes against writers and artists, but as an entity its total quantity is constant. Only the chaotic course of its transformations deceives the philosophers, who mistakenly interpret them as evolution, the laws of which they then search for. But chaos has no laws of development, or meaning and content, or goal and purpose. It was Gogol, Russia's genius, who sang of the 'flying troika,' who prophesied the future in its flight, but it was not in Gogol's troika that the future lay. Here is your troika: Russia's bureaucratic destiny, the faceless troika, the three-man special sessions of the NKVD, the troika that sentences people to camp and to be shot, the troika that made up the lists of those who were liquidated as kulaks, the troika that excluded certain young people from the universities, the troika that refused ration cards to old women from the old regime."

And he would continue—waving his threatening finger at Gogol from his bunk:

"You were wrong, Nikolai Vasilyevich, you failed to understand or to envision our flying troika. The history of human beings lies not in the flight of the troika but in chaos and the eternal transformation of one aspect of violence into another. The troika flies, but the human being is motionless and stagnant. The main thing about him is that he is static. His fate is static. Violence is eternal—no matter what is done to destroy it. And the troika flies along and cares nothing for our Russian grief. And what difference does it make to our Russian grief—whether the troika flies or whether it is frozen stock-still?

"And so it turns out that it is not Gogol's troika, but the one that is here with us now, that sits somewhere up there signing death sentences."

And I lay there half-dead on the bunk and the only thing still left alive in me was my faith: the history of human beings is the history of freedom, from less to more; the history of all life, from the amoeba to the human race, is the history of freedom, the transition from less freedom to more freedom; yes, and life itself is freedom too. And

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this faith gave me strength. I was exploring that precious, marvelous and bright thought which was hidden away in prison rags: "Everything inhuman is senseless and worthless."

And Alexei Samoilovich heard me out, half-alive as I was, and he said:

"You're just fooling yourself with hogwash. The history of life is the history of violence triumphant. It is eternal and indestructible. It may pass through various transformations, but it neither diminishes nor disappears. Yes, and the word 'history' itself has been dreamed up by men. There is no history—it is like grinding water. It is nonsense. The human being does not develop from lower to higher. He is as stationary as a granite cliff. His goodness, his mind, are immovable. The human and humane element does not increase within the human being. What kind of history can human beings have if their goodness is static?"

And I felt overwhelmed—worse than I had ever felt or had ever imagined I could feel. I lay there on my bunk and I thought, "Good Lord! This insufferable pain has been inflicted on me by an intelligent man." And it was like being shot. And I found it unbearable even to breathe. I wanted to die. But my relief came from the most unexpected quarter—they dragged me off again to interrogation. They weren't going to let me have time to catch my breath. And I felt relieved. I believed again in the inevitability of freedom.

The hell with the troika that flies and thunders and signs death sentences. Freedom and Russia will become one!

Do you hear me? When are you going to leave the hospital and come back to me?

SUCH WAS HIS imaginary conversation with Anna Sergeyevna—which never took place.

On a winter day he bade farewell to Anna Sergeyevna at the cemetery. He never did have the chance to share with her what he had remembered, thought about, and written down during the months of her illness.

He took her things to the village, where he spent the day with Alyesha, and then once again returned to his work in the artel. □

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Haim Barkai

The Kibbutz as Social Institution

Kibbutzim are familiar landmarks in Israel's landscape. The roughly 230 kibbutzim that have been founded since 1910 have made an enormous impact on the ideology and politics of Zionism and on the evolving institutional and social structure of, first, Palestine and, then, Israel.

This position of eminence was reached even though each kibbutz is a rather small community, and the kibbutz movement as a whole has always been a minority phenomenon. The average kibbutz has a population of 400 and a membership of about 200—and only three kibbutzim have a population of over 1,000. The total kibbutz population has grown from about 500–600 in the early 1920s to close to 100,000 in the early 1970s, and was always a rather small fraction of the Jewish and *a fortiori* the total population.[1] By the late 1920s (1927) when existing kibbutzim were already more stable, the kibbutz population was about 2.5 percent of the total Jewish population. By 1970 it was about 3.6 percent, after reaching a peak of nearly 6 percent in the late 1930s.

Population and membership grew rapidly by any standard. Even if we take 1927 as the base year instead of 1921, these figures imply an annual average growth rate of about 10 percent for the 45 years ending in 1971. Population growth slowed down considerably in the 1950s and 1960s, and then was close to only 1.5 percent. But compared to the growth rates of rural communities in industrial societies, which are usually negative, this is still a rapid growth rate.

Though the principles of the collective do not permit the use of differential material benefits as work incentives, kibbutzim are among the more efficient production units in the country. This allows the kibbutz population to enjoy a living standard that is about equal to the average in Israel. It also means that the kibbutzim are in the upper third of the total population ranked by per capita consumption levels. Annual per capita income and consumption growth rates of about 4–5 percent respectively (in

This article makes use of data and quantitative analysis prepared for my study "The Growth Patterns of the Kibbutz Economy," currently in preparation at the Falk Institute of Economic Research in Israel. The study is financed by this Institute and the Twentieth Century Fund.

[1] The settling of Degania Aleph by a group of 10 people, who decided to run the settlement on semicollective principles in 1910, usually is identified as the formal founding of the kibbutz movement. Degania's first decade was a period of trial and error, and membership and population were never more than about 20. By 1920 it was a going concern and thus a prototype of a collective community for the thousands of Jewish pioneers who immigrated to Palestine in the immediate aftermath of World War I.

Several hundred of these young people—most of whom came from postrevolutionary Russia and were inspired by both Zionism and the vision of socialism—joined together in 1920 to form the Labor Brigade. The Brigade, which was run on semicollective principles, contracted with the Public Works Department to build several roads. After fusion with a group of pioneers who had come to Palestine before the War, it defined the establishment of *large* collective settlements as one of the tasks of the "workers' commonwealth" it hoped to establish. The settlement of Ein Harod in 1921, which was the first attempt to establish a collective consisting of more than 100 members, the founding of several other smaller collectives between 1918 and 1921, and Degania's reorganization as a full collective, suggest that the early '20s is a more reasonable date for the founding of the kibbutz movement.

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the 1950s and 1960s) underline the dynamics of this process. This rapid increase means that toward the end of the 1970s kibbutz living standards will be close to the present consumption levels of Western and Northern Europe.

Structure and Organization

IT IS in the light of the kibbutz as a collective that these facts have particular interest. A sketch of the kibbutz's structure and government may clarify how this intricate organism, guided by socialist principles, arranges production and distributes income.

The inherently democratic character of the kibbutz is underlined by the fact that the general assembly—composed of the entire membership and meeting weekly—is the central deliberative organ and ultimate source of power. However, the secretariat, which is composed of the principal office-holders and also meets weekly, is the main decision-making organ.

As production and distribution grew in magnitude and complexity, the kibbutzim were forced to give up the innocent belief in decision-making and direct control of every aspect of communal life by all members meeting in the general assembly. The initial attempt at direct control gave way to a more indirect technique of decision-making and control. Step-by-step, as the need arose, this led to the development of an elaborate network of offices, committees, and functions, which represents the machinery of the kibbutz as it is today.

Through this elaborate system of committees and managerial functions a significant part of the adult population has a responsible task of one sort or another. If we add to this the various branch coordinators and take duplication into account, the number of members involved in one or another of these tasks can reach 80–100 in a kibbutz of average size. This means that 40–50 percent of the members take part in running kibbutz affairs. Rotation, as a matter of principle, is an integral element of the kibbutz system of government, and almost everyone is expected sooner or later to serve in one capacity or another.

The attempt to apply socialist principles in everyday practice within communities based on *voluntary* membership has led the kibbutzim, by means of an evolutionary process, to adopt and adapt a set of rules of behavior that may be summarized as follows:

- All kibbutz property is owned in common —the legal title being held in the collective.

Assets that serve in production are operated by the community. Some of the assets that serve consumption are also operated and used on a communal basis. Others are, however, distributed for personal use.

- The kibbutz abides by the principle of self labor, which means that hired labor should not be employed.
- Kibbutz manpower is at the disposal of the community. The allocation of time for work, study, leisure, and the allocation of labor between alternative use in production or service branches are determined by the relevant community organs.
- The kibbutz maintains *equality* in the distribution of real income. First and foremost, this involves a severance of the link between an individual's contribution to production and the real income from which he benefits.

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These tenets refer to the two sides of the kibbutz that make it an integrated social and economic whole. On the one hand, they set rules for running the production and service sectors in which kibbutz income is earned; on the other hand, they imply the principles and thus set the rules for the distribution of real income among the individuals that make up the community.

Operation of the Production Sector

PRODUCTION and the provision of services are organized as separate units, or, in kibbutz parlance, "branches." Each branch is run by a permanent team headed by a branch coordinator. If seasonal work is required, the permanent staff is reinforced by temporary workers. Land, buildings, equipment, and stocks are put at the disposal of the branches. Thus production and service branches compete for scarce resources—for land, capital equipment, unskilled and skilled labor, and for entrepreneurial talent. The function of the branches as the elementary cells of the economic structure is underlined by the fact that they are distinct accounting units.

The permanent team consists of a group of experienced members who work in a branch for a fairly long period, say, several years. This informal group normally includes from four to eight persons and not more than ten.[2] The running of a branch is therefore not burdened with formalities. The branch coordinator who heads the team often "emerges" from among its members. Formally, however, the branch coordinator is nominated by the economic committee in the case of production branches, and by the relevant committee in the case of service branches.

The permanent team shares responsibilities for the regular day-to-day running of the branch. It usually also initiates the adoption of new techniques, which usually involves changes in equipment and the product mix. This team also suggests and studies more extensive development plans before they are submitted for discussion and approval to the relevant committees, the secretariat, and finally the general assembly.

The motivation of individuals to do their best at every production and service branch is evidently the *sine qua non* of kibbutz viability. This applies both on the entrepreneurial and managerial level and on the more humble level of the man on the job. The continuous growth and success of the kibbutz in terms of accepted success indicators shows that, so far, this problem has been satisfactorily solved. How this has been done—and particularly what social and institutional setup ensures that the efforts of individuals will make the kibbutz tick—is probably the most interesting aspect of the matter.

This problem of motivation is more easily raised than convincingly resolved. So far we know only what is not relevant to achieve motivation in the kibbutz. Differential material benefits, a major means for motivating individual performance in the nonkibbutz world, are ruled out both by ideology and in practice. Nonmaterial benefits that are also relevant in the nonkibbutz world are, however, not excluded. Respect and esteem for a good day's work and for success in entrepreneurial functions is an important factor in motivating individuals toward work and responsibility in the kibbutz. And the disfavor, with which shirking is viewed in the closely knit communities such as even the largest kibbutzim still are, is also a powerful sanction.[3]

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[2] The size of the permanent team in a manufacturing enterprise, which is by now one of several branches in many kibbutzim, may sometimes be larger. This point will be discussed later.

[3] Mean kibbutz population in the late 1960s was a little over 400, and 95 percent of all kibbutzim had a total population of 800 or less. This, of course, means that kibbutz members know each other very well indeed. This is less true in the handful of settlements with a population of 1,000–1,500. Still, even there direct personal contacts are strong in comparison with nonkibbutz society.

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The kibbutz expression "work attitude" conveys in a nutshell that self-discipline is expected to count most in this context. It is self-discipline sustained by the socialist maxim "from each according to his ability," and by the concept of "human fulfillment" through work.[4] These notions require of each individual the greatest effort for the good of the community, even though he cannot expect to be rewarded personally. This is not to say that community disapproval, which is mainly informal, fulfills no function in maintaining work discipline.[5] Even informal disapproval affects behavior or may induce people who cannot adapt themselves to this self-imposed discipline to leave. Hence personal effort in a kibbutz depends ultimately on ideology and thus on the intellectual ability of members to understand, absorb, and act upon a complicated set of abstractions.

Self-discipline sustained by ideology explains behavior on the level of the individual kibbutz member. The larger perspective of the kibbutz as a whole, however, is another matter. Obviously, rules are required for operating its components and performance criteria in order to ensure optimal allocation of manpower and other resources among competing branches. One may therefore ask, what are the rules that guide the operation of each production unit? And what are the principles of coordination among the units that make up the production sector of the kibbutz? Finally, how do these mesh with operations of the personal services sector?

Consider, first, the problems faced by a production branch. How do the people in charge of a branch decide how much to produce, and on what basis do they determine the input combination—that is, the size of the various inputs to be used, such as labor, raw materials, and fixed equipment? [6] More than the short-run and long-run factor combination has to be determined. The size of the operation, which means the size of the output, also has to be set—and for the long run this applies both ways, to the contraction or even the phasing out of a branch altogether, as well as to its extension.

The general rule to be applied by production branches is obvious—size and composition of output-and-input combination should be set so as to maximize the differences between sales proceeds and (alternative) costs. This maximum net income condition is conceptually identical with the conventional rule for efficient production applied by a competitive firm; but under kibbutz conditions its application involves a peculiar problem related to the use of labor. The nature of this problem may become clear if we specify the relevant variables and parameters more precisely. Since the output of

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[4] The view that work is one of the more important values of human life has been accepted by all shades of opinion among the forerunners of the collective movement before World War I and its immediate aftermath. This view, from which they deduced that it is everybody's duty to work, has been strongly influenced by the Russian populist and revolutionary traditions from Kropotkin onward.

[5] A formal decision to request that an individual leave a kibbutz—the strongest sanction possible—is rarely applied. The annual number of such expulsions could probably be counted on the fingers of both hands for the entire movement. A motion of censure put to the general assembly is also considered a very severe measure and rare. This may be interpreted as an indicator of the universal acceptance of kibbutz rules on labor discipline which, of course, reflects the fact that membership is voluntary. It also means that the social consensus and atmosphere forces people to leave if they cannot adapt themselves to the rules of the kibbutz.

[6] Consider, for example, the dairy in which labor, feeding stuff, the herd of cows, and the milking parlor are used to produce milk (and meat). Note that although the technology of production is given for the short run though not for the longer run, the equipment/labor ratio is not predetermined even for the short run. It is always possible to change the 8-hour milking shift (which is usual in Israel), to a 12-hour milking shift (conventional in Western Europe). This would reduce the labor intensity of the operation and correspondingly the output. Changes in number of feeding units and type of machinery is another example of possible substitution applicable even in the short run. The efficient running of the dairy therefore requires decisions on these matters for the short run, and on matters of technology for the long run.

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each kibbutz is small in relation to the size of the market, the product prices are given. The sales proceeds of each branch thus depend on exogenous data—on market prices and on quantity produced—a decision variable. On the cost side kibbutzim are also too small to affect input prices—the prices of raw materials, water, machinery—so that only the quantities of these inputs are variables whose determination is part of the problem.

This condition, however, applies neither to kibbutz labor nor land. The latter carries a nominal rent, and as no wages are paid for kibbutz labor, prices for these two major inputs are not exogenous market parameters as is the case with the other inputs. Yet, though there is no formal charge for the use of labor and land to any of the branches, their use is not "free" to the kibbutz, and therefore not free to its branches. The scarcity condition in this case is not imposed by the conventional market constraint—price—but is a quantity constraint. The land endowment of each kibbutz is a given quantity.[7] The size of the labor force in the short-run is also given. In the longer run, though, its size does change—it has been rising slowly throughout the 1950s and 1960s. Yet whatever the determinants of the long-run supply of kibbutz (self) labor, a wage rate as such is not one of the determinants of its size at any point of time.[8] The employment of labor and the allocation of land to any production and service branch—given the full-employment situation—which has been a reality since 1940, inevitably presents an alternative cost in terms of the diversion of these resources from other existing or projected branches.

[7] Institutional constraints on the size of land holdings apply not only to kibbutzim and in practice mean that the land endowment of a kibbutz is a given size.

[8] Though the wage rate as such is not a determinant of the supply of kibbutz labor, per capita income is one of the factors that determine the size of membership and thus of the labor force. Per capita income or even income per worker are, however, not identical with wages in a kibbutz.

Though the quantity constraints on labor and land complicate the formal specification of the kibbutz model, they are merely a technical complication which can be dealt with in analytical terms. It is possible to deduce for each kibbutz the optimum solution for the size of its outputs and the allocation of inputs on the basis of information concerning the technical relationships in production and service branches, exogenous data on factor and product prices, institutionally specified demands for personal services and amenities, and on the basis of the quantity constraints on labor and land. This solution involves setting "shadow" prices for land and for labor.[9] These shadow prices represent the alternative cost of land and labor from the point of view of the kibbutz.

Thus, given the prices of all factors, including the shadow prices of factors which "belong" to the kibbutz and also the prices of products, each production branch is requested to follow a simple rule: it should produce a product mix and use a factor combination that maximizes the difference between sales proceeds and the alternative cost of factors inclusive of labor and land. If the rule of maximizing this difference—defined as "net branch income"—is followed by every production unit, net kibbutz income will be the highest feasible under the given set of technological, market, and ideological constraints.

Now if the labor supply is given by the size of the kibbutz membership, the corresponding shadow price of labor, deduced from the equilibrium conditions, reflects ideological constraints. The optimum posi-

[9] A formal presentation of the short-run model of the kibbutz production sector, the analytical technique of deriving the optimum solution, and the nature of this solution in terms of factor allocation, output mix, and the corresponding shadow prices of land and labor is given in Haim Barkai, "Rules for Operating the Kibbutz Production Sector," *Proceedings of the Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities*, vol. IV (1971), pp. 281–96 (Hebrew; English forthcoming). The extension of the model to include the operations of the personal services sector is conceptually straightforward.

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tion, which specifies the shadow prices of land and of labor, simultaneously specifies the quantities of factors bought in the market, and how they and the kibbutz's own factors are allocated between the competing branches and the product mix.

Modern techniques of analysis and data processing make an optimum solution along such lines not only conceptually meaningful but also feasible in practice. Since the short-run labor supply is a known quantity, it is evidently easier to reach an equilibrium solution for shorter periods. Yet this approach is also flexible enough to allow solutions for the longer run. The crucial difference between the long-run and the short-run is the specification of the long-run supply function of labor. One cannot expect this to be a fixed quantity. Kibbutzim have gained and expect to gain population and labor through natural increase and inflow and have been losing population and labor through outflow. Inflow and outflow depend probably on internal factors, such as expected living standards, and on exogenous factors such as size, the country of the members' origin before immigration, the state of the economy, and last but not least, the ideological ramifications of the political situation. Birth rates, and hence natural increase, also partly depend on these factors.

This difference in the nature of the supply functions means that the long-run shadow price of labor may differ from the short-run price. More concretely, in response to rapid technological change and the expected growth of the capital stock, on the one hand, and an expected small expansion of kibbutz population and labor force on the other, the long-run shadow price of labor is expected to rise. This, of course, suggests the adoption of policies for the phasing out of labor-intensive branches and operations, hence far-reaching changes in the branch mix of the production sector and a restructuring of the personal services sector to save labor-intensive operations. In practice this was the most important feature of the evolving pattern of the kibbutz in the 1960s. The rapid extension of manufacturing, the introduction of (partial) self-service in dining halls, and the tendency to shift from the local kibbutz school to the district school are obvious examples of such expected future trends.

Self-Labor in Principle and Practice

AS WE have seen the equilibrium configuration of factor allocation and product mix of kibbutz production crucially depends on the size of its labor force. The consistency of the optimum output mix and input structure with ideology therefore depends on the application in practice of the self-labor principle. This means that the kibbutz labor force *per se* should consist of members and candidates for membership, the older kibbutz children, and "temporaries." The common denominator of these three categories is the absence of a wage nexus between the kibbutz and the individuals within it. This constraint on the actual size of the labor force is effective only as long as the ideological barrier against the employment of hired labor remains in force. This barrier is obviously more easily maintained when there is little inducement to hire outside labor.

The analytical framework outlined above suggests the context in which economic forces could generate powerful pressures toward the hiring of outside labor. The equilibrium solution which specifies the optimum factor allocation and product mix for the kibbutz also involves the determination of the shadow price of kibbutz labor. Suppose that this price, which actually represents the productivity of labor (at the margin), is higher than the relevant market wage rates. If this is so, the kibbutz evidently can increase its total and hence its per capita material income by hiring labor. Obviously, the greater the gap between the shadow price of labor and market wages, the greater the temptation to overcome the ideological bar-

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rier that separates the kibbutz production sector from the general labor market.[10]

In the 1920s, 1930s, and for most kibbutzim the 1940s, this was an academic question. The shadow price of kibbutz labor was low and this obviated any incentive to employ nonkibbutz labor. Disguised unemployment was the rule rather than the exception for most kibbutzim before the World War II boom which, in Palestine, began in 1941. By the late 1940s, however, the situation was changing, and from the early 1950s on almost all kibbutzim in existence for, say, ten years, suffered labor shortages. In terms of price relatives this suggests, to say the least, a gap between the shadow price of kibbutz labor and the market wage rates of unskilled and semiskilled farm and factory labor. Not many kibbutzim were established after 1951, and most kibbutzim by that time had passed into the phase of labor shortage. And so by the early '60s the economic incentive to breach the self-labor principle had affected almost every kibbutz.

The advent of the kibbutz industrial revolution around the mid-1950s has had considerable bearing on this issue. Even small-scale manufacturing enterprises require at a minimum about 10–15 percent of the labor force at the disposal of an average-size kibbutz. Therefore, if efficiency in some lines of production requires plants engaging at least 40–50 workers per shift, even a kibbutz with a population of 800 would be hard-pressed to supply the necessary labor. Kibbutzim are therefore inevitably caught in a dilemma: either to reject a promising line of manufacturing, or to engage hired outside labor.

Finally, the general economic situation, particularly in the 1950s, also had some bearing on the issue. In the wake of mass immigration unemployment was a major problem, and it was most severe among new immigrants. Public opinion and government therefore applied moral pressure on the kibbutzim—which were short of labor—to forgo, temporarily as it was then put, their principle of self-labor.

These factors succeeded in undermining the ideological barrier that separated the kibbutz from the general labor market. By 1954 kibbutzim employed probably 2,500 hired workers, about 8 percent of total kibbutz employment in those days. But although the economic incentive to engage more hired workers grew significantly in the later 1950s and in the 1960s in view of rapidly rising labor productivity and an accelerating process of industrialization, the kibbutz movement succeeded in preventing a further significant rise in the relative size of the hired-labor sector. In the later 1960s there were 5,500–6,000 hired workers, 8–9 percent of the total kibbutz workforce.

This slight erosion of the principle of self-labor is the result of the expansion of kibbutz manufacturing enterprises. The degree to which hired labor is employed in this branch is of an entirely different order of magnitude from that of other production and service branches: in 1969 over 50 percent of the workers in kibbutz manufacturing enterprises were employees, as compared to only 4–14 percent in farming and personal service branches respectively.[11]

[10] An equilibrium setup which involves a positive difference between the shadow price of labor and market wages, and hence a lower than feasible per capita (material) income, is *prima facie* not optimal from the point of view of the kibbutz. Yet since such an equilibrium setup is the result of the constraint on the supply of labor imposed by the principle of self-labor, it is undoubtedly optimal since it ensures the highest per capita income consistent with the ideological tenets. This suggests at once that the loss of per capita income—the difference between the equilibrium level of (per capita) income when the principle is observed and the equilibrium level of income when it is not—offers the kibbutz a measure of the (minimum) cost of "self-labor."

[11] Several of the larger enterprises originally fully owned by kibbutzim are by now only partially owned by them. These have been organized as limited liability companies in which the other partners hold 50 percent or somewhat less of the equity. Partnerships with nonkibbutz interests have been established for several reasons. Yet an important consideration in favor of establishing such joint

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This "nonfailure" on the employment front, as kibbutz people would prefer to describe the containment of forces that were pushing up the share of hired workers in kibbutz employment, prevented the irrevocable erosion of the self-labor principle. The efforts to stave off what might have been a fatal blow to the kibbutz as a form of social organization induced the rapid introduction of labor-saving techniques and the phasing out of labor-intensive lines in the production sector. In personal services, which demand a considerable slice of the labor force, it set in motion an extensive respecification of services provided, far-reaching reorganization, and the substitution of more capital-intensive techniques in their production.

The Principle of Equality

THE SEVERANCE of the link between an individual's contribution to production and personal benefits is the key that translates into everyday reality the socialist principle of equality: "let each consume according to his needs *within the means of the community.*" The qualification added to Louis Blanc's famous aphorism is an expression of the scarcity constraint, which is always relevant and was very much to the fore in the heroic founding days of the 1920s, when real income was very low indeed and sometimes not much above starvation levels.

We may note that the needs concept is specified in terms of individual choice, so that the kibbutz technique of income distribution, as it has been evolving over 50 years, is required to satisfy three conditions simultaneously: it is to allow for differences in the tastes of individuals; adapt living standards to real income; and ensure equality. An obvious way to abide by these not necessarily consistent conditions is to adopt a technique that supplies "free" goods and services to members and yet maintains overall budgetary control.

Communal dining, a common practice in the 1920s, was initially introduced more in response to exogenous conditions than to ideological motivations. This way of distributing food is obviously compatible with the collective life. The communal dining hall has consequently evolved as the focus, in every sense, of kibbutz life—a point underlined by the central location and architectural eminence of kibbutz dining halls. One of the more felicitous aspects of communal dining is the feasibility of realizing the principle of equality without overt rationing and its unsympathetic trappings, while allowing a limited though growing variety, which means some freedom of consumer's choice.[12]

As far as food is concerned, and this is a major item of the consumption basket, equality in the kibbutz is not only preached but also practiced.[13] Now, if this technique of distributing real income—collective consumption in kibbutz parlance—could be applied generally, it would be the optimum solution from the point of view of equality, on the one hand, and budgetary control, on

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ventures has always been legitimation of the engagement of hired labor. When labor shortage forces a kibbutz to hire labor in order to maintain production at an existing plant or the possible loss of a promising venture suggests initially basing production on the hiring of some labor, this is usually considered a mere stopgap. When the "temporary" hiring of labor turns into a more or less permanent feature, kibbutzim egged on by the executives of their federation look for a way out, which partnership with nonkibbutz interests seems to offer. Whether this offers more than a formal escape from the dilemma is, of course, open to dispute.

[12] Variety was quite limited in the 1930s, while in the 1920s, when kibbutzim were as poor as church mice, it was practically nonexistent. Although the variety of food offered at each meal is still limited, by now there is always a choice between at least two main dishes. The range of choice has been growing in the course of time, which in effect means that it has been growing with income.

[13] Food was undoubtedly the dominant item of expenditure in the 1920s and 1930s when it claimed about two-thirds of total consumption expenditure; in the early 1950s it was still more than half of total consumption expenditure. The ratio fell rapidly in the later 1950s and the 1960s, and by the end of the 1960s it was about 30 percent.

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the other. This, of course, means that all the other components of consumption—housing and furniture, clothing and footwear, health and education, holidays and such sundries as cigarettes—should be distributed by means of a similar technique.

Collective consumption—which means the distribution of free goods and services so that rationing is not applied at the individual level—is in fact applied to the distribution of some other consumer goods and services. But whereas food is at the "private" end of the consumption range, these other goods and services, which include the so-called welfare-state items, are at the "public" end of the range. Medical care, which is unlimited, is an obvious example, and so are retirement benefits.[14] Of course, such other insurance and welfare-state items as maternity leave and the equivalent of full life insurance (both of which are ultimate goals of the welfare state) are, because of its very nature, part-and-parcel of the kibbutz way of life.

Child care and education from birth to the age of 18 also is a communal service.[15] It was the principle of equality between the sexes, requiring equal treatment in every type of work—from household jobs to work in the production branches—that led to the introduction of communal living quarters for the children. This brought about the system of communal child care, one of the most characteristic features of the kibbutz and one of its most interesting contributions to human experience.

The technique of free distribution has never been applied to the whole range of goods and services that make up the consumption basket. Clothing and footwear, cigarettes and more expensive toiletries, housing, furniture and (some) household equipment, and pocket money are allocated to individuals by means of different rationing techniques.

The case of clothing and footwear suggests the reason for the adoption of rationing rather than the technique of free distribution. These items obviously belong in essence to the realm of the individual. Thus, even if a uniform analogous to the monastic habit were adopted by kibbutz members, a common pool would still run into such problems as size. But since the kibbutz was not conceived as a monastic order and has never been run as such, attention has been paid to individual taste, which is of considerable significance in regard to dress and footwear. Initially, kibbutzim did attempt to run the clothing department on a non-

[14] Since no individual accounts are kept and membership entitles one to all goods and services offered by the community, drawing a pension in the technical sense of the term is, of course, alien to the kibbutz way of life. Retirement is expressed in the reduction of working time, and is thus restricted to the production side. Otherwise everything is the same; the kibbutz thus provides the most comprehensive old-age insurance feasible.

The same applies to medical care. The kibbutz insures everyone with Kupat Holim, the Histadrut (labor federation) "sick fund." But health care is literally unlimited and the kibbutz covers from its own funds anything that is not covered by this Histadrut plan. Similarly, kibbutzim participate in the old-age insurance plan run by the National Insurance Institute. They pay the dues and are paid the benefits coming to each member after the retirement age of 65. The National Insurance pension, of course, covers only a minor part of the cost of the kibbutz's own comprehensive scheme.

[15] In almost all kibbutzim, children, defined as the 0–18 age group, live apart from their parents in the "children's house." Nursery, kindergarten, and 12 years of primary and secondary school are provided for all the children. This includes extracurricular facilities for children with artistic talents. Thus, every child is given the opportunity to develop his intellectual and artistic potential without much reference to budgetary constraints.

Education, to each according to his intellectual potential and his own desire, has not yet been extended to the realm of higher education. This is now a hot subject in the kibbutz movement, so that things are in a state of flux. In practice, most kibbutzim in which the question arises permit their young people to attend one of Israel's universities after completing national service. This comprehensive system of education offers even now more years of schooling than are required by law. Its flexibility of response to individual needs, and also the small size of the kibbutzim which implies low student/teacher ratios is expensive and requires a higher share of disposable income than the country's average.

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individual basis. However, this was in the 1920s and early 1930s, when expenditure on clothing, footwear, and similar items was minimal owing to low incomes. The practice was soon restricted, though with some ideological misgivings, to work clothes and linens. It should not come as a surprise that the women initiated and promoted the trend toward individual as against communal choice.

By the end of the 1930s, kibbutzim had adopted a system whereby each person was entitled to a clothing basket composed of specified items, which allowed some choice within the prescribed limits. This device, the "personal budget," was similarly applied to footwear, cigarettes, and pocket money which was minimal, even by the standards of the period. The clothing and footwear budgets worked rather like the points systems, perfected during World War II, while such items as cigarettes were rationed outright. The several budgets were specified in physical terms, which meant that they were kept in separate watertight compartments.

The allocation of housing is another interesting example of the intricate problems involved in applying equality in real life. Since in most kibbutzim children live in children's houses, the rule requiring similar housing conditions can easily be applied by allocating a similar amount of space to each family. Nevertheless, differences in the size and quality of available housing units, which reflect mainly time of construction, exclude equal distribution of housing services to adults at any point of time. Some members live in better, indeed often much better, apartments than others.

Since housing is a major component of the standard of living, and since equal distribution of housing services is impossible, allocative devices based on the principle of equality had to be devised. This led to the development of a code for the allocation of housing and consumer durables based on what may be called the principle of "potential" equality. It is in essence a point system for calculating priority. At any given time a member's points ranking determines his housing standards and the composition and quality of the consumer durables put at his disposal.

Equality, with respect to this major component of the standard of living, is consequently not understood to mean equal consumer benefits at every point of time. It is interpreted rather in a less rigid sense to mean equal rights on a given level of real consumption to everybody whose ranking reaches a specified level in terms of the point system. And this rank, one may note, is only to a very minor extent—via seniority—related to the *potential* (still not the actual) contribution to production.

The Personal Budget Controversy

THE KIBBUTZ obviously could not have survived as long as it has but for its success in solving the problem of running its production sector. Productivity gains, which are impressive even by the high standards of the Israeli economy, ensured rapidly rising disposable income, which from the middle 1950s onward was high enough to approach European standards of affluence. Thus a greater variety in the composition of the consumption basket became a feasible proposition. This led to the reconsideration of some of the traditional distribution techniques, in particular the personal budget system.

The issue had been in the background since the mid-1940s, yet in the 1960s the much higher income levels, which have continued to rise rapidly, and changes in the value system of Israeli society have put them squarely on the agenda of the kibbutz movement. The immediate cause of the renewed discussion was the suggestion, support for which has been gathering momentum, to scrap the personal budget technique of distributing the nonfood and non-welfare-state items of the consumption basket, and replace it by what has been called a "comprehensive" budget. This has given rise to

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a debate that may turn out to be significant for the future of the kibbutz.

The reformers who demand the adoption of the "comprehensive" budget maintain that the personal budget technique, which in essence constitutes physical rationing, is outdated and wasteful. Rationing could work efficiently, they maintain, only as long as communities were small, homogeneous in background and age, and as long as there was a limited choice. Thus, in the 1920s, '30s, and in the '40s, as long as incomes were low, food and the welfare-state items, all of which are distributed free, swallowed up most of the consumption expenditure, leaving little for clothing and the other individual items of consumption. It was then the smallness of the allowance that necessarily limited variety and made rationing a satisfactory allocating device.

The poverty constraint, however, began to disappear in the late 1940s, and even more rapidly in the 1950s and 1960s. A continuous rise in real income allowed expenditures on these components of kibbutz consumption to grow more than proportionately, thus allowing for more variety and a wider consumers' choice. The detailed itemization imposed by the "personal" budget technique, which originally may have been reasonable, cannot cope with extensive variety and puts unnecessary limits upon the individual's freedom of choice. It also generates waste, not only because communal and personal preferences may be inconsistent, but also because rationing induces people to exhaust their annual rations whatever their immediate needs.

The "comprehensive" budget the reformers propose to introduce instead of the old "personal" budget would do away with categories and itemization. The community would then control only the size of the budget and specify the limits of the catchall category it is supposed to cover. Each member would receive an equal endowment of money tokens, which sets the overall (annual) expenditure constraint. The tokens would be used for all the items previously covered by the personal budget. They could be used to acquire goods and services from the kibbutz store, or might be converted instead into cash for off-kibbutz purchases.

The reformers maintain that the technique is fully consistent with the principle of equality, since the endowment would be handled on a per capita basis. Its main advantage, it is claimed, is its flexibility: it allows consumer choice for just those consumer goods in which personal taste counts most. Other advantages would be the elimination of the red tape required by personal budgeting, and of the personal friction inherent in a system of controls.

The introduction of the comprehensive budget would thus streamline the mechanism of kibbutz income distribution and arrange it into three "neat" categories, whose boundaries could be shifted to fit the needs. These categories would be identified by different distribution techniques. The first would include all the goods and services which would continue to be distributed on a "free" basis —such as food, maintenance of children, and education, medical care, cultural activities, retirement, etc. The second category would include housing and furniture to be allocated, as in the past, on the basis of the point system. The third category would include all those consumption items excluded from the first two categories, which would be covered by an annual comprehensive budget to be allocated on a per capita basis.[16]

Yet despite the advantages that seem obvious to the outsider, this proposal has met with strong opposition. Two of the three

[16] In the 1960s the "free" items came to 60–65 percent of total consumption expenditures; the share of housing services was 20–25 percent, and the share of items that would be covered by the comprehensive budget was 20 percent. In the past the share of the "free" category was significantly higher—close to 70 percent in the 1950s, and 75–80 percent in the 1940s and 1930s. Expenditures on food were 25–30 percent in the 1960s, 35–40 percent in the 1940s, and probably about 50–60 percent in the 1930s and 1920s respectively.

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major kibbutz federations so far have failed to adopt the proposal, and as yet it is applied only in a minority of kibbutzim.

The traditionalists who oppose the introduction of the comprehensive budget do not agree that, as the reformers put it, the proposal to streamline income distribution has only technical significance. To the traditionalists the substitution of personal for communal choice is the very feature that is objectionable. Neither the fact that the comprehensive budget involves an *equal* per capita allowance nor that it would apply only to 15–20 percent of total consumption expenditure softens their rejection of the system.

The traditionalists could, of course, argue that the share of the relevant consumer goods has been growing rapidly and that therefore the present figures do not reflect the future. But it is not the quantitative aspect on which they rest their case. The traditionalists reject the comprehensive budget because they consider it to be a retreat from the principles of collective consumption. They maintain that the pure model of collective consumption envisages free distribution of every commodity and service—and that a cash allowance should be given only as pocket money to be spent off the kibbutz. Progress on the consumption front would therefore imply the extension of the range of commodities which are supplied "free." Admitting the force of the argument that growing affluence allows for more variety and hence for more personal choice, they suggest extending the range of "free" items. To support their case they refer to the fact that some items, such as basic toiletries, which were once rationed, are now "free" goods. Their argument would be considerably strengthened if they were to suggest that clothing, footwear, and smoking should also be made "free." The obvious inducement to members to build up a sizable wardrobe if there were no constraint at the individual level makes this impossible. The traditionalists therefore can suggest only the introduction of more flexibility in the clothing and footwear budget to allow for choice within a detailed list of similar items.

This is now the accepted practice in most kibbutzim and will be so for a long time to come, unless the comprehensive budget is accepted. The more individualistic attitude of the younger generation, bred in growing affluence and probably with a changing attitude toward ideology and a better understanding of the inevitable waste involved in every rationing system, may tilt the balance toward reform.

Industrialization

KIBBUTZ MANUFACTURING had its modest beginnings in the early 1940s. It grew in strength during the 1950s, yet the pace of industrialization gathered momentum only in the 1960s, when the kibbutz movement really plunged into its industrial revolution. The rapid progress of this process—which involved a major change in branch structure and corresponding changes in the way of doing things and in attitudes—is obviously one of the best indicators both of the spirit of enterprise and of the relative ease in which labor and other resources could be shifted to other branches. The severance of the link between the standard of living and occupation, which is one of the characteristics of the kibbutz, reduces an important source of the friction that impedes labor mobility in the nonkibbutz environment. This has eased the massive shift into manufacturing, which has already taken place and will probably gather speed in the 1970s. Yet this massive transition to manufacturing poses a major problem for the kibbutz in running its production sector.

The two major initial problems that arise when a manufacturing enterprise is set up in a kibbutz are size and division of labor. Manufacturing proper (as distinct from repair shops, which were always an integral element of the kibbutz production sector) means that, while most of the personnel is

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employed on routine jobs, a small number of highly trained and talented personnel is required in managerial and entrepreneurial positions. The size issue arises because even a small-scale manufacturing unit requires a permanent labor force of about 15 and usually closer to 20 or 25 workers.

These problems of size and numbers of workers needed, and the greater degree of specialization that they entail, have qualitative significance in the kibbutz context. As mentioned, the kibbutz production sector consists of a number of production units, most of which are various branches of farming run by small teams of permanent workers. Even a "large" branch in one of the larger settlements would rarely employ a team of more than, say, ten people; a more typical case is the five- or six-man team.[17]

The small size of the permanent work team has hitherto made it possible to run these branches informally. Though the branch coordinator is officially responsible for management, future planning, etc., there is no need for a clear-cut separation between white-collar functions and manual work. The branch coordinator, though he spends relatively more of his time on managerial functions, usually takes an active part in doing the job itself. Similarly, the work of other members of the team involves managerial and even entrepreneurial functions that require initiative and prepare them in due course for the top job in this or another branch. This informality, which allows a great deal of freedom to the individual, is in part inherent in some of the technical features of farming—for example, in the fact that the whole farm labor force is not concentrated under one roof.

This way of running the production sector is perhaps the best approximation to the ideal of workers' management. Its interesting feature is, of course, that in contrast to the Yugoslav variety of workers' management, it was never predesigned as a complicated set of rules and regulations. It evolved, rather, in response to practical requirements and now has proved to be a practical proposition for 50 years.

Yet this informality, with its large measure of individual freedom in doing the job, has to give way in manufacturing establishments. Thus, size and the requirements imposed by techniques of industrial production may entail the substitution of a formal work discipline for the traditional informality that is ultimately based on self-discipline.[18] The production line of course requires repetitive work, specialization, and stricter coordination, while the expertise demanded of technical and managerial personnel draws a much sharper dividing line and a psychological barrier between manual and managerial jobs. Manufacturing therefore could lead to the formation of a managerial elite, which would exclude members who are less able and talented in matters of business administration and leadership.

The crucial issue thus is whether equality, which is the basic premise of kibbutz life, can withstand the strain of industrial expansion, which is bound to run into increasing inequality of know-how and responsibility. An obvious line of escape lies in the latent promise that anyone who is reasonably capable can be trained to perform expert or managerial functions. Indeed, such training and opportunities of advancement are offered particularly to the younger generation of members. The basic premises inherent in the democratic structure of the kibbutz probably provide in manufacturing enterprises, as in other branches, for greater

[17] Seasonal work is handled by reinforcing the permanent team with kibbutz labor not permanently allocated to the branch. In summer, when the seasonal demand for labor is particularly high, it is filled by the part-time work of visiting youth groups and the 14–18-year-old kibbutz children.

[18] The fact that in some kibbutz manufacturing enterprises members are required to clock in and out—even though the procedure has no meaning in terms of material reward—indicates the direction in which things are moving. Obviously, the bigger the manufacturing enterprise, the greater the problem of work discipline.

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vertical mobility than in nonkibbutz establishments. Yet this does not apply to everyone; it does not apply to the elderly.

The availability of alternative employment in other branches—the job-rotation that is practiced in the kibbutz as a major means of achieving social mobility and preventing the creation of an entrenched group of functionaries—is of course another escape valve for those with routine jobs. Yet this rotation among jobs and offices, which has probably contributed more than any other factor to the viability of the kibbutz as a model of democratic and equalitarian social organization, is much more difficult to realize in manufacturing. There, because of the greater technical and financial intricacies involved, the immediate cost of rotation may seem prohibitive. There follows an obvious conflict between long-run considerations favoring rotation and short-run calculations of its immediate cost.

Many if not most of these problems would rapidly disappear if industrialization were not permitted to expand beyond the present scale. A reversal of the trend would probably reduce the number of hired workers to a negligible figure, thereby halting the erosion of the self-labor principle once and for all. It would also ease some of the other problems which come to a head in manufacturing enterprises, such as identification with the workplace, the conflict between management and workers, etc.

Yet to suggest that this trend be stopped, or even to try to slow the pace of industrialization could well bring about the doom of the kibbutz movement. If in the past the kibbutz had failed to organize production efficiently, it would not have achieved its present success as a form of social organization. One of the main determinants of efficiency in the kibbutz, shown in terms of productivity levels and productivity gains, has been the ability to identify growth sectors and weed out losing lines, and in the ingenuity with which the production potential has been adapted to the more promising products.[19] This is, of course, the main force behind the all-out drive to establish manufacturing enterprises, which means in practice that kibbutzim have been opting in favor of further industrialization.[20]

Since Israel is rapidly developing a diversified industrial economy, and since success in maintaining high productivity gains in farming means further reduction in labor input, the kibbutz must continue its course of industrialization if it is not to become a backwater. The challenge facing the kibbutz in the 1970s is therefore to adapt its social framework to the requirements of industrial manufacturing without yielding its socialist principles.

Interkibbutz Equality

ALTHOUGH WE HAVE occasionally referred to the kibbutz movement as a whole, we have up to now concentrated on a consideration of the workings of the individual kibbutz. This presumes that each kibbutz is economically a separate entity—and indeed, this is one of the most important principles of the Israeli collective movement, adopted after an acrimonious controversy back in 1922. It has never been questioned since.[21]

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[19] These are expressed quantitatively by comparatively high labor and capital productivity (at the margin), and by the annual 4–5 percent total productivity gain averaged over the last two decades.

[20] Employment in kibbutz manufacturing has grown by 65–70 percent since 1960 and by 250 percent since 1950.

[21] This debate was concerned with what was *prima facie* a practical problem—whether Ein Harod, established in 1921 by the Labor Brigade, should have complete financial independence or whether its current expenditures should be controlled by the national executive of the Labor Brigade. The latter alternative implied that the national executive would also have effective control of the economic activities of all the settlements and work groups belonging to the Brigade. Centralization was strongly supported by several of the leading personalities but was opposed by a majority of the members of Ein Harod. The upshot of the debate was the split of the Brigade—Ein Harod's decision in favor of absolute autonomy in financial matters left no other option. It was the Ein Harod policy which won and set the pattern for the kibbutz movement as we know it today.

This debate was strongly affected by the concur-

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This, of course, means that the principles of collective production and equality of (real) income distribution apply only within each individual kibbutz. Relations with other entities, whether kibbutzim or not, are conducted on purely commercial terms. Thus, although the kibbutz is justifiably identified as a socialist community, the presumption has always been that it must operate in a nonsocialist environment, as indeed it does. The kibbutz therefore has to accept the rules of the market economy for its outside relations. Some of its major problems therefore are the consequence of this fact—the hired-labor issue being one of them, and the nature of interkibbutz relations may rapidly become another.

The individual kibbutzim are separate legal and economic entities, though they all belong to the kibbutz movement—technically, through membership in one of the three kibbutz federations, and they all identify ideologically and spiritually with the movement as such. It is the *movement* which formally and informally influences a most important lever of kibbutz life—the inflow of manpower from the nonkibbutz environment. The harmony of outlook could be severely affected if there were significant material differences between kibbutzim. Outstanding differences in the standard of living of different kibbutzim, though technically feasible in view of the principle of autonomy, obviously cannot be accepted by a movement that has made equality one of its basic tenets. The ideological constraint on the size of interkibbutz inequality is reinforced by the members' potential interkibbutz mobility. The latter is obviously a powerful check on any excessive intersettlement divergences in living standards, even if these were not ruled out by ideological considerations.

Although differences must and do exist, they never seem to have been serious. Estimates based on per capita income and real consumption in the 1950s and 1960s support the view that interkibbutz inequality was small until the mid-1960s. These results obviously are not a matter of chance. Over the years, several control factors have helped maintain interkibbutz equality. Since practically every kibbutz settlement has started from scratch in or after 1921, and most settlements are not yet 25 years old, control of the real-resources endowment—the basic capital and land endowments—evidently contributed to equality. The policy of the Jewish Agency's Settlement Department, which has been in charge of settlement activities throughout, has always been guided by the principle of equal treatment of all settlers. This has been interpreted to mean that the means of production must be allocated on a per capita basis. Accordingly, each family settled on land has been provided with an equal endowment—equal in the sense that it is intended to provide the same per capita income, although it varies in composition according to the technical circumstances.

To carry out this principle is a tricky matter because of differences in location, natural conditions, and the variance of the most important production resource—the human factor.[22] The homogeneity of the human factor as between kibbutzim has proved one of the most important social characteristics of the movement; together with the equality of the initial resources endowment, it has helped to bring about and maintain the remarkable interkibbutz equality of living standards demonstrated by the 1950s

rent controversy in the Soviet Union. Many of the leading personalities who had been for centralization returned to the Soviet Union in 1925.

[22] In the Moshavim (another form of Israeli cooperative settlement consisting of separate family farms), considerable differences in performance, and hence in per capita income, have appeared within a short time (5–10 years), although each family farm was initially endowed with the identical land and capital stock. Heterogeneity of the human factor is probably the most important reason for these rapidly growing differences in income levels.

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and 1960s data, which, *a fortiori,* had also prevailed in the preceding decades.

Industrialization may therefore have a significant effect on interkibbutz equality. Since most kibbutzim venture into this line at a later stage of their development, the equal endowment rule no longer applies, and where it does, to a much smaller extent. Since the establishment of a manufacturing enterprise also involves putting many eggs into one basket, the risks involved are much greater. Moreover, the availability of a small cadre of trained personnel at an early stage of establishing a manufacturing enterprise can make the difference between success and failure. Since manufacturing is rapidly becoming the major branch in the kibbutz economy, it is possible that there will develop much greater differences in performance and hence in per capita income than indicated by our data. Whether the kibbutz movement will be able to interfere with the process by means of income redistribution is an open question, and its solution must be left to the future.[23]

The Socialist Experiment in the National Context

ONE MAY be tempted to ask, what does the success or rather the "nonfailure" of the kibbutz movement prove?[24] We had better state first what it cannot prove. Since it has accepted the rules of a market economy, this social experiment can give no guidance on how to run a democratically controlled socialist economy—which it has not attempted to do. Yet it has shown that on the microeconomic and microsocial levels a socialist form of organization is a viable proposition. It is of course still an open question whether these results depend on the still fairly small size of the typical kibbutz community.[25]

The facts should by now suggest even to skeptics that the substitution of a collective personality for the individual ego is not inconsistent with remarkable economic performance, whatever the standard of comparison. It is also clear that the inevitable delay in the process of decision-making involved in democracy, which in practice means rule by committee, is more than compensated for by the purely economic advantages inherent in the kibbutz.[26] The most important of these are probably economies of scale, the considerable built-in facilities for internal factor mobility, and the ease of access to training, which facilitates rapid improvement in the quality of the most important factor of production—human labor.

Yet it would be misleading to attempt an evaluation of the kibbutz merely as a socialist entity, thus measuring its success and failure only in terms of the principles of collective production and consumption. Though the kibbutz attempts to carry socialism into effect on the microplane, its ideology and practice, which have ensured its viability in Israel, have always been intimately related to Zionism as an idea. Yet this fusion of Zionism and socialism has

[23] Interkibbutz taxation is progressive, but the sums involved, which are used to finance the central organization of the kibbutz federations, are too small to effect significant differences in income. The main and undoubtedly the most promising way in which the kibbutz movement attempts to attain interkibbutz equality is by means of a "manpower levy" imposed on the older and more prosperous settlements. The "men" coopted by the central authorities are usually highly trained and experienced, and are sent for periods of a year or more to help train manual and managerial personnel of younger and less experienced kibbutzim.

[24] This expression was used by Martin Buber when referring to the performance of the kibbutz movement in a lecture delivered in 1945. It still seems apt today.

[25] We may note in passing the controversy, on the eve of the settlement of Ein Harod in 1921, about whether a kibbutz of 150 people is a viable proposition.

[26] In the running debate on kibbutz viability, which was at its height in the late 1920s and early 1930s, kibbutz opponents maintained that the absence of direct material motivation, the elimination of the budget constraint, hence the inevitable neglect of collective property, and finally red tape, mean that the kibbutz cannot survive as an economic entity. The financial difficulties of kibbutzim in those days gave *prima facie* support to those who believed and maintained that the kibbutz was doomed to immediate failure.

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been the very essence of both the conceptual framework of the kibbutz and its practice.

Although it was not the only form of social organization adopted by the Jewish settlement movement that has built up Israel practically from scratch, the kibbutz was in the vanguard. Ever since the establishment of Degania, and particularly after 1921 when the idea of a large and growing kibbutz community came into being with the settling of Ein Harod, the Zionist idea of establishing a settlement and the socialist idea of building it as a collective were fused. The concept of Socialist Zionism in its purest form therefore meant first and foremost the establishment of a kibbutz in Palestine. Thus the ideology of the kibbutz movement underlined the unity of the twin ideas which were also practical tasks. Hence, each new kibbutz that was established participated in the national endeavor through the conquest of the desert, at the same time creating a more just form of social organization and thereby proving that socialism can be not only preached but practiced.

The development and growth of the kibbutz accordingly has been an integral part of the process that reestablished a Jewish national entity and eventually the State of Israel. In more than one sense the kibbutzim were the vanguard that continuously pushed on to the boundaries—geographically no less than conceptually. Therefore the identification of several generations of kibbutzniks with the kibbutz as idea and institution draws strongly on both national aspirations and socialist fulfillment. It would be hard to imagine a movement of 100,000 people living in socialist communities within an industrial society that operates a market economy, in the absence of the "national" factor. In turn, it goes without saying that neither socialism nor Zionism could have made kibbutzim a practical proposition but for the availability of a group of people with an appropriate educational background and thus capable of thinking in terms of the abstractions that are required to make a kibbutz tick. □

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Theodore Draper

Communists and Miners 1928–1933

In all of American labor history, there have been five national labor organizations —the Knights of Labor, American Federation of Labor, Industrial Workers of the World, Trade Union Unity League, Congress of Industrial Organizations—or six if we count the merged AFL-CIO. Of only one can it be said that not a single book, dissertation or article, scholarly or otherwise, has ever been devoted to it. With one possible exception, not a single book, dissertation or article has ever been devoted to any of its constituent unions.[1]

Total oblivion for over 35 years has been the peculiar fate of the Trade Union Unity League. Not even the Communists, who invested so much hope, toil, and trouble in it, have seen fit to give it a fitting commemoration. For an effort of such magnitude, it figures relatively briefly in the voluminous writings of its general secretary, William Z. Foster, and no other former leader has written about it at all.[2] A recent bibliography on "Communism in the United States" does not record a single item dealing retrospectively with the TUUL or any of its unions.[3] The studied neglect of this subject might itself be studied.

My intention here is to tell the story, at least in its main lines, of the National Miners Union. When it was formed, the Communists' hopes for a successful revolutionary trade-union federation rested on it more than on any other of their new unions. Much can be learned about the whole TUUL, therefore, from the fate of its miners' union. Indeed, the NMU was a forerunner of the TUUL, and it is impossible to understand one without the other.

THE TUUL was an outgrowth of the Trade Union Educational League. The latter was formed by Foster in November 1920 before he decided to join forces with the Communists. He seemed to be an unorthodox syndicalist who perversely believed in working inside the AFL. Both his syndi-

[1] I have omitted the early National Trades' Union which lasted less than three years, August 1834 to May 1837. The possible exception is *The Fur and Leather Workers Union,* by Philip S. Foner (Newark: Norden Press, 1950). But this is an apologetical, party-line "official" history that deals very superficially with the TUUL phase of the union to which it devotes only about one-sixth of its pages.

[2] Foster dealt at greatest length with the TUUL in his 1937 book, *From Bryan to Stalin* (New York: International Publishers, 1937), pp. 216–81. Ten years later, however, in *American Trade Unionism* (New York: International), he devoted no more than 8 out of 373 pages to the TUUL in a book specifically concerned with trade unionism. And in 1952, he allotted no more than 4 out of 572 pages to the TUUL in his *History of the Communist Party of the United States* (New York: International). One gets the impression that he increasingly wanted to forget about it.

[3] Joel Seidman, *Communism in the United States —A Bibliography* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1969). This excellent work lists 51 items under Trade Union Unity League, but none of them are studies of the TUUL or its unions.

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calism and his AFL orientation made him unacceptable to the early Communists who were fervent "dual unionists." They believed either in supporting the IWW or in forming a new industrial union including the IWW. In any case, the AFL was anathema to them. In its origins, then, the TUEL represented a repudiation of dual unionism, not because Foster believed in the AFL's craft-union policy but because he considered it necessary and possible to take over the AFL and convert it into an instrument of revolutionary syndicalism.

Unknown to the founding fathers of American Communism, the trade-union line of the Communist International had changed in favor of working within the AFL even before the TUEL was formed. At the Second Congress of the Comintern in the summer of 1920, the two main American delegates, Louis C. Fraina (later known as Lewis Corey) and John Reed came under intense pressure to drop their dual-union predilection and to fight the AFL bureaucracy from within. Fraina was largely persuaded, but Reed came home unrepentant. By May 1921, however, the American Communists fell into line and officially adopted the Comintern's position against leaving the existing unions. No unpleasantness with unhousebroken Americans disturbed the founding congress of the Red International of Labor Unions, better known as the "Profintern," a contraction of the Russian form of the name, in July 1921.

Foster attended the first Profintern congress as an "observer." He stayed in Moscow for three and a half months, and during this time the deal that made him a Communist was consummated. The TUEL became the Profintern's American affiliate, and Foster became the American Communists' top leader in the trade-union field. The TUEL functioned essentially as a propaganda organization to consolidate Communist influence and win converts in the existing trade-union movement. It succeeded in gaining considerable influence and numerous converts in 1922–23 during the Communist alliance with the Farmer-Labor movement. But the Communist-Farmer-Labor split in July 1923 hit back at the TUEL, which had been largely responsible for making the alliance possible. After the presidential election of 1924, the TUEL was reduced to little more than its hard core of Communist trade unionists and retained a significant influence in only two or three fields.[4]

One of these fields was mining. The Communists owed their opportunity in this field to John Lewis's ruthless treatment of his opponents in the United Mine Workers of America. In 1926, the Communists supported a "Save the Union Committee," which put up John Brophy, a Progressive, to oppose Lewis for the UMW's presidency. Brophy claimed the victory, but Lewis counted the votes—and promptly expelled Brophy from the union. The Progressives and Communists made common cause against Lewis and called a "National Save the Miners Union Conference" on April 1, 1928. In mining at least, the TUEL was still a force to be reckoned with.

Just before this conference was held, the Profintern changed its line. The Americans were just as unprepared for the new line as they had been at the beginning of the decade for the old one. The Profintern's change of line was an early phase of what came to be known as the "third period." As it was interpreted by Stalin, it came to mean the collapse of "capitalist stabilization" or the recovery that had set in after World War I and the imminence of a new revolutionary wave or, as he put it, "the eve of a new revolutionary upsurge." Stalin's pronouncement came at the end of 1927 and amounted to a theoretical signal for a "Left turn" in tactics.

The head of the Profintern, S. A. Lozov-

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[4] I have told much of this background story in *American Communism and Soviet Russia* (New York: Viking Press, 1960). Footnotes here are given only for material not already cited in my book.

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sky, knew how to take a hint. He was the first to apply Stalin's augury of the new period to his own field. At the Comintern's Ninth Plenum in February 1928, he came out in favor of new, revolutionary unions instead of working in the old ones. He chose to use the American trade unions as the opening wedge of the new policy. He specifically struck at the "Save the Union" slogan as "meaningless" and demanded the formation of new American miners' unions. The American delegates were so horrified at the idea that, as Lozovsky put it, "they argued furiously, they argued foaming at the mouth, they accused me of schism."[5] The plenum compromised by telling the American Communists to form new mine locals without leaving the UMW. But Lozovsky was not satisfied. At the Profintern's own Fourth Congress the following month, he renewed the attack. Again the Americans resisted, but in the end, the Profintern ordered them to prepare the way for a new mine union.

The TUUL was conceived as a classical "dual union" which aimed at making itself the only union by destroying and replacing the AFL. The TUUL's program stated: "The fascist AFL is the enemy of the working class."[6] A fascist enemy hardly deserved anything better. In principle, then, the TUUL and AFL were to be locked in deadly conflict. According to the Comintern's Russian expert on American affairs, the TUUL's task was "to destroy the American Federation of Labor, the most reliable support of American imperialism."[7] But this did not mean that the Communists were instructed to give up working, wherever possible, inside the AFL. While building the new unions was its main task, the TUUL was also told to organize "the revolutionary workers within the reformist unions."[8] This secondary task was interpreted by Foster to mean that it was necessary to subordinate the work of the organized Communist groups in the "reformist unions" to the build-up of the revolutionary unions for the purpose of "drawing these trade union workers under the ideological leadership of the TUUL, and, as speedily as practicable, into mass affiliation with it."[9] In effect, Communists in the AFL were expected to work for the AFL's destruction and to pick up the pieces for the TUUL. In practice, the Communists had too few forces to work in both the TUUL and AFL, and the latter was invariably sacrificed as long as the Communists still hoped to make a success of the TUUL. The attitude was most clearly expressed by Lozovsky himself as late as 1932: "But that we want to break up the reformist trade unions, that we want to weaken them, that we want to explode their discipline, that we want to wrest them from the workers, that we want to explode the trade union apparatus and to destroy it—of that there cannot be the slightest doubt."[10] Yet even this seemingly unmistakable phase of Communist trade-union history is now being rewritten.[11]

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[5] "A. Lozovsky's First Speech," the *Communist International,* vol. 4, no. 17 (1929), p. 658.
[6] *The Trade Union Unity League: Its Program, Structure, Methods and History* (New York: Trade Union Unity League, 1930), p. 17.
[7] S. Mingulin, the *Communist,* June 1930, p. 512.
[8] *The Trade Union Unity League, op. cit.,* p. 17.
[9] William Z. Foster, the *Communist,* October 1930, p. 885.
[10] *R.I.L.U. Magazine,* February 1932, p. 245.
[11] Professor Philip S. Foner has written: "Following expulsion from the AFL unions, the left-wing forces advanced their own program outside the Federation through the Trade Union Unity League, organized in 1928. But the TUUL was not viewed by its founders as a 'dual union,' but simply a means of advancing the program of organizing the unorganized and battling for those already organized until the progressive forces once again gained influence in the A.F. of L." ("Lenin and the American Working-Class Movement," *New World Review,* Winter 1970, p. 130, note). There is almost nothing true in this version. The TUUL was organized in 1929, not 1928. Its formation had nothing to do with the expulsion of the "left-wing forces" from the AFL. The most notable case of the expulsion of a Communist—that of William F. Dunne—had occurred in 1923, and there were no significant expulsions in 1928 or 1929. In order to form the TUUL, the Communists had to break with the rest of the

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The Communist hope of destroying the AFL was not as quixotic as it may seem today because the AFL had been doing such a good job destroying itself. After 1920, the AFL had gone into a steady, paralyzing decline. In ten years, its membership had gone down from about 4 million to less than half.[12] The hardest hit unions were those in the most mechanized and mass-production industries. At the beginning of the depression, 70 percent of the AFL's membership was concentrated in only five fields—transportation, building, printing, public service, and theaters. In some fields, such as coal and textiles, the unions were as sick as their industries. In others, such as food and lumber, only a tiny portion of the labor force was organized. In such basic industries as iron and steel, food packing, automobiles, rubber products, chemicals and electrical products, unionism was virtually nonexistent.[13]

In effect, the AFL had settled down to protect the special interests of preponderantly native-born, white, skilled, craft workers. They were entrenched mainly in the smaller shops and hand industries of the preindustrial era. Their leaders set themselves obstinately against the industrial unionism which the newer, rising industries demanded. By 1929, a majority of American workers were not skilled craftsmen, and a substantial minority were neither native-born nor white. The AFL contained no more than one-third of all skilled workers, and few of the semiskilled and unskilled.[14] The unorganized were so much more numerous than the organized, and the AFL made so little effort to organize the unorganized, that there was plenty of room for a "dual union," even if the AFL was not destroyed in the process.

To all appearances, then, the AFL was a hopelessly bankrupt, moribund organization. "The AFL is in a period of senility," an American Communist confidently asserted. The workers, he gloated, were leaving the AFL by hundreds of thousands, opening "a glorious opportunity for revolutionary trade unionism."[15] By reducing themselves almost entirely to skilled workers, Foster maintained, the old unions had made themselves "incapable of organizing the broad masses of workers and defending their interests."[16] If the Communists were right, therefore, the AFL was doomed by irresistible historical forces. The TUUL decided to base itself on the unskilled and semiskilled who were said to be "the decisive factors in modern industry." Its industrial form of organization would enable it to take in all sections of the working class—blacks, women, youth, skilled, unskilled, native, foreign.[17] The field was free of the AFL in most of the key, basic industries anyway. In large part, the TUUL was called on to fill a vacuum, not to displace the AFL.

Thus it was not impossible to make a theoretical case for the new line. Whatever their initial misgivings, once the decision was made in Moscow to set up new, revolu-

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left-wing movement. It is, therefore, utterly misleading to suggest that the TUUL was formed by "left-wing forces" rather than by the Communists alone. The TUUL was decidedly viewed by its founders as a "dual union." They certainly wanted to organize the unorganized and to battle for those already organized—but to supplant the AFL, not merely to gain influence in it. They adopted the latter course only after they were ready to give up the TUUL. And this history of the absurd comes from the author of four volumes on the American labor movement, the last of which, fortunately, stops in 1917!

[12] The AFL reported a membership of 4,078,740 in 1920, its high point. A careful student estimated that the 1930 membership, officially reported as 2,532,261, was probably less than 2 million (Lewis L. Lorwin, *The American Federation of Labor* [Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1933], p. 303).

[13] Leo Wolman and Gustav Peck, "Labor Groups in the Social Structure," in *Recent Social Trends in the United States* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1933), pp. 832–35.

[14] Of the 25,997,530 wage earners in 1930, 6,503,062 were classified as skilled, 6,940,324 as semiskilled, 8,286,962 as unskilled, and 4,266,956 as service workers (W. S. Woytinsky, *Labor in the United States* [Washington, D.C.: Committee on Social Science Research Council, 1938], p. 18).

[15] Sam Darcy, *International Press Correspondence*, August 28, 1930, p. 835.

[16] The *Communist*, October 1930, p. 887.

[17] *The Trade Union Unity League, op. cit.*, p. 18.

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tionary unions, the American Communists carried it out loyally. If capitalism was collapsing and the revolutionary upsurge was imminent or at least inevitable, as the doctrine of the third period assured them, they could even tell themselves that the political correctness and ultimate success of the TUUL and its constituent unions seemed assured.

II

Only six months after they had been told to do so, the American Communists set up the National Miners' Union on September 9–10, 1928. They managed to get 675 delegates to come to the founding convention, of whom 120 were arrested by the Pittsburgh police who forced the meeting to move to East Pittsburgh, two hours away. It was, as its first president, John J. Watt, put it, "a convention for which there was no money, a convention literally of starving men." It issued a statement of policy calling on all miners to "break completely with the Lewis machine," pledging a "fight to the last to remove every obstacle to build an organization to comprise the whole of the rank and file coal miners," and proclaiming as its eventual aim the "complete emancipation from capitalist exploitation." A Negro, William Boyce, was named vice-president, and a veteran Communist organizer, Pat Toohey, secretary-treasurer. The latter was the union's key official.[18]

Two more new unions soon followed. The National Textile Workers Industrial Union was formed a few days later, September 22–23, 1928, and the Needle Trades Workers' Industrial Union on January 1, 1929. These three were the only full-fledged national unions in existence by the time the Trade Union Educational League was officially transformed into the Trade Union Unity League at a convention in Cleveland, Ohio, August 31–September 2, 1929. The industries most heavily represented at this convention were mining, steel and metal, and needle trades.[19]

For the mine workers, the depression of the nineteen-thirties was only a continuation of the depression of the nineteen-twenties. The number of commercial mines declined from 9,331 in 1923 to 5,642 in 1931. Production fell from 970 to 383 million net tons in the same years. As a result, fewer miners were needed, and those who worked were paid less. Of the 527,563 bituminous miners in 1930, over 200,000 were considered "surplus." This vast pool of unemployed and unemployables gave the mineowners a crushing advantage over the coal miners. After a temporary rise in 1926, owing to the British general strike, earnings fell precipitously. Between 1929 and 1931, the average annual income of miners declined 45 percent. The sick industry bred a sick union. Membership in the United Mine Workers dropped from 450,000 to 150,000. Throughout the nineteen-twenties, John L. Lewis was too busy beating off rivals in the union to fight off employers in the industry.[20]

The party itself, however, had a relatively weak base at this time in the mining field. A recruiting campaign had once brought as many as 1,500 miners into the party, but no more than 300 or 400 remained in it by the time the NMU was formed. The drop was especially sharp in the key Pittsburgh area where the mine membership had fallen from 700–800 to no more than 200. The number of members in the Ohio mine fields was even smaller.[21] In practice, the party members in the new union were the only ones on whom it could count. The union structure was too flimsy and its membership too amorphous to lean on before the NMU was tested in at least one strike.

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[18] John J. Watt, "Launching the National Miners Union," *Labor Unity*, October 1928, pp. 2–6.

[19] *Labor Unity*, September 14, 1929, pp. 2 and 4.

[20] Most of the data in this paragraph comes from Homer Lawrence Morris, *The Plight of the Bituminous Coal Miner* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1934), pp. 1–34, 155–56.

[21] J. Stachel, the *Communist*, May 1929, p. 244.

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Its first strike call was issued in the Illinois mine region in December 1929, over a year after the union was formed. As many as 10,000 workers allegedly answered it, but they were confined to two or three localities, and the strike never spread throughout the state. It was later disclosed that the union had distributed the strike leaflet after calling the strike and had never set up a single strike committee. Jack Johnstone, the TUUL's national organizer, later charged that the NMU had "depended solely upon the miners responding to the strike call." [22] After a few days, the strike collapsed. "This ill-advised, poorly organized strike killed the NMU in Illinois, and greatly undermined the years-long strong CP and TUUL influence in these coal fields," Foster recalled. "After this defeat the NMU forces in Illinois gradually liquidated its skeleton locals and supported the growing opposition movement in the UMWA." [23] In effect, the NMU had as yet barely begun to threaten the coal operators or Lewis's UMW.

The NMU soon tried again. In April 1930, it called for a general strike, this time in the anthracite region of Pennsylvania and West Virginia, to start on September 1. But no organizer was sent in for months, and as the date neared, the union quietly forgot about it. Yet spontaneous strikes were erupting all through the hard-coal region. Sometimes the miners struck first and called in the NMU, which sometimes tried to catch up with strikes, but "extreme lack of capable forces and organization" frustrated it repeatedly.[24] As a result of this letdown, the NMU's top leadership was shaken up in mid-1930. At its second convention in July of that year, Freeman Thompson came in as president and Frank Borich as secretary. The union itself was rechristened the Mine, Oil and Smelter Workers Industrial Union, but the party leadership, which had not been consulted in advance, disapproved, and the old name was soon restored.[25]

Meanwhile, the TUUL as a whole was not doing much better. Where the TUUL leaders did not think that they had enough strength to set up unions, they formed "leagues" as an interim, preparatory stage. By the spring of 1930, eight industrial leagues were initiated—railroad, auto, metal and steel, food and packing, marine, shoe and leather, lumber and agriculture. Fourteen district councils were also set up on a geographic basis, the largest in New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Detroit, and Cleveland.[26] By the end of 1930, however, only one league was promoted to the status of a union, the Marine Workers, instead of six as planned.[27] By mid-year, Foster expressed alarm that a campaign for 50,000 new members by June 30 had brought in no more than 7,000.[28] At about the same time, a Moscow watchdog of the American party described the plight of the TUUL as "exceedingly tragic." [29] The TUUL hit bottom in the last half of 1930. It reported that its four national unions had suffered "serious declines in membership." The other leagues and groups were "only skeletons of what they should be." Councils existed in only a few of the largest cities. "Gross neglect" characterized the work

[22] Johnstone, *Daily Worker,* September 1, 1930, p. 4; Stachel, the *Communist,* March 1931, p. 209. For the original strike call and response, see *Labor Unity,* December 24, 1929, p. 1, and January 4, 1930, p. 1. Lozovsky denounced the conduct of the Illinois strike at the Profintern's Fifth Congress, *International Press Correspondence,* September 11, 1930, p. 894.

[23] William Z. Foster, *From Bryan to Stalin, op. cit.,* p. 232.

[24] *Daily Worker,* April 30, 1930, p. 4 (strike call); P. Frankfeld, *ibid.,* July 3, 1930, p. 4 (no organizer); Tom Johnson, *ibid.,* September 25, 1930, p. 4 (strike ignored); F. Borich, *ibid.,* July 10, 1930, p. 4 (frustration).

[25] *Daily Worker,* July 30, 1930, p. 1 (change of name); Browder, the *Communist,* August 1931, p. 686 (criticism). As far as I can make out, the change in leadership was not immediately reported and was first mentioned incidentally by Borich, *Daily Worker,* August 20, 1930, p. 4.

[26] *Labor Unity,* April 12, 1930, p. 4.

[27] *Ibid.,* May 3, 1930, p. 1.

[28] *Ibid.,* June 25, 1930, p. 1.

[29] S. Mingulin, the *Communist,* June 1930, p. 510.

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in the AFL. The balance sheet was almost entirely negative.[30]

III

But 1931 was a different kind of year. As the Depression deepened, new opportunities for organization arose. The Communists were grimly determined to learn from their setbacks and mistakes. Again they invested their main hopes in their miners' union. Not that the NMU was needed to stir up the coal miners in 1931. At least four major coal strikes took place that year in widely separated fields and under exceedingly different auspices.

In March, about 20,000 anthracite miners walked out in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania. They were led by an insurgent "Progressive" group in the UMW. It was beset by both the UMW, which denounced the action as an "outlaw" strike, and by the Communists who sent in organizers in a vain effort to take it over. This strike dwindled by mid-April, and merely foreshadowed more serious trouble elsewhere.[31]

In July, another major strike of perhaps 20,000 miners took place in the Kanawha Valley of West Virginia. It was brought about by the West Virginia Mine Workers Union, recently formed by Frank Keeney, one of Lewis's old enemies. Keeney was backed by a small group of "Musteite" organizers from the Brookwood Labor College. This support brought down the special wrath of the Communists who especially resented Edmund Wilson's view that the new union was "a spontaneous native labor movement with trained native left-wing leadership," on which the future of the country, he implied, might depend.[32] The Communists made an effort to inject themselves into this strike, also without success. By mid-August, Keeney's strike gave out for lack of funds and food, much to the Communists' satisfaction. In both the Wilkes-Barre and Kanawha strikes, the Communists conducted unsuccessful raiding operations, directed equally and indiscriminately against John L. Lewis and against Lewis's opposition.

Meanwhile, the Communists had one coal strike all to themselves.

The preparations for this strike show how the party and union worked together. First the party leadership decided to concentrate on four districts, one of which was District 5 with headquarters in Pittsburgh. The Pittsburgh District Committee then formulated a "Two Months' Plan of Work," which called for concentrating on the mining fields of Pennsylvania and Ohio. This plan was turned over to the party "fraction" in the National Miners Union, which proceeded to work up a similar two months' plan of action for the union. In January 1931, this plan was adopted by the NMU's top leadership, which largely duplicated the party fraction. To popularize the plan, union conventions were held in Ohio on May 17 and in Pennsylvania on May 23–24. The latter brought together 175 delegates whose presence in Pittsburgh proved to be most propitious.[33]

Despite these strenuous efforts, the outlook was not auspicious. The Pittsburgh district of the party was weaker than ever. There were at most 75 party members in the mine fields of western Pennsylvania and no more than 25 in eastern Ohio and West Virginia. The units to which they belonged functioned

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[30] Resolution adopted at the National Executive Board meeting, November 27–29, 1930, in *Labor Unity*, December 6, 1930, p. 2, and December 13, 1930, p. 2.

[31] The TUUL's role in this strike may be followed in *Labor Unity*, April 4, 11, and 18, 1931.

[32] This passage appeared in the first of Edmund Wilson's two articles on the West Virginia strike, *New Republic*, July 8, 1931, p. 199. Mr. Wilson later omitted all but the first five words in the version that appears in *The American Earthquake* (New York: Doubleday Anchor Books, 1958), p. 321. The Communist reply took the form of three articles by Bill Dunne in the *Daily Worker*, July 18, 20, and 21, 1931.

[33] Frank Borich, "How the Present Miners Strike Was Prepared," *Party Organizer*, August 1931, pp. 2–4. The January 1931 meeting of the NMU's National Board was reported in *Labor Unity*, January 24, 1931, p. 2.

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poorly or not at all. On the eve of the strike, the local Communists regarded its chances pessimistically. The NMU, with about 100 dues-paying members in the Pennsylvania district, was not much better off. Foster later wrote them off as "a handful," Browder as "a mere shadow" of a union.[34]

Nevertheless, when the opportunity came, the Communists were set to take advantage of it. On May 25, the day after the NMU conference in Pittsburgh ended, the Carnegie Coal Co. announced a wage cut to take effect on June 1. The delegates to the convention, who had not yet dispersed, and the Section Committee met immediately. They decided to call a mass meeting to consider the possibility of a strike. The meeting was held at only one mine in Atlasburg on May 25. It voted to strike, and a picket line was formed at the mine on the morning of the 26th. This mine was shut down that same day and two more owned by the same company the next day. No more than 1,000 miners went out in all three.[35]

It was later pointed out with some pride that this was not a "spontaneous" strike of which the NMU assumed command after the strike began, as had happened in previous strikes. This one was considered a step forward because it had resulted from prior planning and organization. But the strike could not be spread through the NMU, which had few functioning mine locals in the area. It resorted, therefore, to the more elementary tactic of "marches." [36] The strikers marched from mine to mine for miles around, shutting down one after another. In a few days, 10,000 miners were out. For about a month, the walkout in Pennsylvania seemed to leap from mine to mine and from state to state. At its height, it was claimed, the strike encompassed over 40,000 miners in western Pennsylvania, eastern Ohio, and northern West Virginia. Such a rapid expansion and extension of the strike, with the union's limited forces, was possible only because the miners were in such an explosive mood. The Communists provided the sparks that sufficed to set them off.

The local Communist miners had little faith in the strike, and it would not have gone very far if it had been left up to them. In its initial stages, it depended on a few, weak party units in the mine fields. At the very outset, according to Foster, these units "collapsed." [37] Whatever planning and organization this strike may have had were still very limited and inadequate. But once the strike showed how combustible it was, the top leadership took over. It sent in about 25 organizers from other districts, making it difficult for the latter to carry on their own strikes.[38] The TUUL's high command hurried to the scene. Foster himself spent five months in the area. Bill Dunne and Jack Johnstone went in and out. The party's auxiliaries, especially the International Labor Defense and Workers International Relief, moved in. The money-raising specialist, Alfred Wagenknecht, hastily formed a Miners Relief Committee. A special "top committee," made up of local and outside Communist leaders, took charge of the entire operation.[39]

While the strike was going strong, miners in the thousands signed up in the union and spilled over into the party. Recruiting went on for both at once, first into the union, then more selectively from the union into the party. The party claimed its share of the membership spoils, in the words of the district organizer, on the ground that: "The strike cannot be considered a victory for

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[34] Carl Price, *Daily Worker,* July 6, 1931, p. 4; S. Willner, the *Communist,* January 1932, pp. 35–36; Foster, *ibid.,* July 1931, p. 596; Browder, *ibid.,* August 1931, p. 685.

[35] Borich, *op. cit.,* p. 4. This article curiously gives the dates as April instead of May. The number of miners was reported in *Labor Unity,* June 6, 1931, p. 1.

[36] Jack Johnstone, "How the N.M.U. Is Being Built During the Strike," *Party Organizer,* August 1931, p. 6.

[37] Foster, *Daily Worker,* September 7, 1931, p. 4. The breakdown of the local party machinery was vividly described by F. Borich, *Party Organizer,* May 1931, pp. 21–24.

[38] *Party Organizer,* August 1931, p. 25.

[39] Foster, *Daily Worker,* September 7, 1931, p. 4.

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the workers, unless a mass Party is established." [40] Since all the union organizers were Communists, who made no secret of it, joining the union was often the first step toward joining the party. The principle was, as one party recruiter put it, that "a Communist, a member of a Communist Party is first and foremost a Communist, no matter what work he is engaged in; that the first thing to be considered is the building of the Party." The union and the party could not have a conflict of interests, according to the party line, because the union could not be built successfully without building the party. Field organizers in closest touch with the various union committees were given detailed instructions how to recruit for the party and train new party members.[41] Those who wanted to get ahead in the union soon learned that it was advisable to join the party. In the Communist press, the party and the union took credit for the strike interchangeably. It was truly, as the Politburo said it was, "the largest strike struggle ever conducted under the leadership of the Party." [42]

By late June, however, the strike began to run down. Without large-scale relief, no strike in this period could hope to go on for long. Despite the Communists' best efforts, the relief work was pitifully inadequate. A maximum of 30 local relief kitchens were no match for the hunger of an estimated 120,000 miners, women and children in direst need. The strike, moreover, was unusually violent even for mine strikes. In a single town, Wildwood, one striker was killed and 11 were seriously wounded. The breaking point for most miners came when the Pittsburgh Terminal Coal Company signed a contract with the United Mine Workers on June 23; the first time in four years, the company was willing to deal with the union. The AFL union also succeeded in getting agreements in one of the West Virginia mine fields. Indirectly, then, the NMU was partly responsible for the first signs of recovery on the part of its most detested rival because the coal operators and government considered the UMW the lesser evil. Ironically, some operators also indicated a willingness to accept the Communist union's demands, but the party held out for a general agreement and refused to permit local settlements. Weary and confused, thousands of miners began to drift back to work. By July, some Communist organizers were willing to admit that the strike was going down, but the party leadership continued to insist that it was still advancing. Frank Borich, the NMU secretary, later revealed that 85 percent of the miners had returned to work while the strike leadership was talking of a "second offensive." Not until August 8, after 12 bitter, vicious weeks, was the strike officially brought to a close. Too late, the party recognized that it should have ended much sooner.[43]

In the end, no one benefited. The workers went back, if at all, unconditionally. The NMU and party lost ground in the same mine fields as quickly as they had gained it. The defeat, Foster later admitted, had "dealt the N.M.U. a fatal blow." He attributed it primarily to the lack of a "real Party base" before the strike. With a real base, he contended, "we could have organized three times as large a strike." [44] By the same reasoning, it might have been argued, the strike was at least three times as large as

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[40] Carl Price, *ibid.*, July 6, 1931, p. 4.

[41] A. Markoff, "Building the Party in the Mine Strike Area," *Party Organizer*, August 1931, pp. 8–13. This entire issue was devoted to the miners' strike; it is invaluable for an insight into the way the party treated such a strike from within.

[42] Resolution of the Politburo, *Daily Worker*, August 3, 1931, p. 4.

[43] Willner, *op. cit.*, pp. 38, 43–44; Browder, *Daily Worker*, July 14, 1931, p. 4; Resolution of the Politburo, *ibid.*, August 15, 1931, p. 4; Resolution of the ECCI, the *Communist*, May 1932, p. 409; Stachel, *ibid.*, June 1932, p. 533; Nat Honig, *Labor Unity*, April 1932, p. 19.

[44] Foster, *Pages from a Worker's Life* (New York: International Publishers, 1939), p. 182; Foster, *Daily Worker*, September 7, 1931, p. 4. In *From Bryan to Stalin*, Foster called the strike "a deadly blow" to the NMU (p. 231).

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the existing base was able to cope with. By overreaching itself, the party was again guilty of trying for a grandiose victory instead of being satisfied with a modest gain on which to build for the future. In the event, the strike was another one of the Depression's elemental outbursts which owed far more to the miners' base conditions than to the condition of the party's base. Nevertheless, this strike was an astonishingly impressive achievement, far beyond anything John L. Lewis's much larger UMW was able to claim at the time. The Communists proved that they could start a strike and get tens of thousands of workers behind them if they struck in the right place at the right time with all their forces. They did not prove that they knew how to end a strike successfully or get anything out of it for themselves or anyone else. This strike ended so disastrously that their mine union never recovered from it. Communist organizers could go into these mine fields once but not twice.

This mine strike was considered important enough for the Comintern's attention. It criticized the lack of preparation for the strike, the weakness of the local organizations, the inability to score a "material success" in the outcome of the strike, the tendency of the strike leadership to go ahead without consulting the mass of strikers, the inadequacy of outside help, and the failure to order a retreat in time. The document also raised the interesting question of what the main object of a Communist-led strike was. It sternly insisted that the main object was "the *revolutionization of the striking workers,*" not the simple winning of "material results" as set forth in the strike demands, or even the strengthening of the party organization. But, it argued, the workers could not be revolutionized unless they were convinced that the Communists knew how to conduct a strike successfully. Material success was not always possible, but *"without a most serious struggle for the material outcome, there can be no prospect of political success* in the strike" (italics in original).[45] In this way, the Comintern tried to reconcile "revolutionization" and "material results" so that the former depended on the latter. In practice, there was nothing more difficult for a revolutionary movement to do than to achieve these two objectives simultaneously. It was much more likely to get revolutionization without material results or material results without revolutionization.

IV

But the Communists were not yet finished in mining.

The fourth great strike in 1931 took place in Harlan and surrounding counties in Kentucky. Harlan's 44 mines accounted for almost one-third of all the coal produced in eastern Kentucky. The land was so poor and barren that mining was almost the only way a man could make a living there. The population of 64,500 came from the purest, old, white American stock, long isolated from changes in the rest of the country. Their lives were primitive, their religion fundamentalist. The miners worked and lived in a state of industrial peonage—company houses, company stores, company-dominated schools, churches, police, politics, and courts. In 1931, Harlan mines averaged only three days a week, and take-home pay of $4 or $5 a week was not uncommon. Some miners were paid entirely in scrip and never saw money.[46] This territory had been, for at least a decade, a union organizer's nightmare. After gaining a nominal foothold in Kentucky during World War I, the UMW had been driven out by 1921. In February 1931, a 10 percent wage cut brought the

[45] "Lessons of the Strike Struggles in the U.S.A.: Resolution of the E.C.C.I.," the *Communist,* May 1932, pp. 402–10.

[46] This paragraph is based mainly on testimony in "Conditions in Coal Fields in Harlan and Bell Counties, Kentucky," *Hearings Before a Subcommittee of the Committee on Manufactures, U.S. Senate, 72nd Congress, 1st Session* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1932).

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Harlan miners to the point of taking the advice of their minstrel and midwife, Aunt Molly Jackson:

> All a-going round from place to place
> bumming for a little food to eat,
> Listen, my friends and comrades, please take
> a friend's advice,
> Don't put out no more of your labor, till
> you get a living price.[47]

As often happened in these circumstances, a spontaneous flare-up of unfed, fed-up workers went looking for leadership. The choice fell on a nearby UMW official who was not enthusiastic about the prospect. The union, however, encouraged the miners by sending its vice-president, Philip Murray, the future president of the CIO, to Harlan to make an appeal for membership. Hundreds, then thousands, signed up. The mine companies promptly began to discharge union members. In March, the miners' cup of misery and desperation overflowed. More than 10,000 went out on strike and shut down the mines. The UMW was not prepared for the open warfare that inevitably followed. On May 4, heavily armed deputies and gun-bearing miners fought one of the bloodiest battles of the Depression. The death toll of the Battle of Evarts, as it was called, came to three deputies and one miner. Thirty-four union members eventually faced charges of murder. The UMW decided to give up the strike and get out of Harlan again.

Hardly knowing one mine union from another, the miners felt leaderless and betrayed. The Communist press did not take an interest in Harlan until the end of May, three weeks after the shoot-out in Evarts. A special correspondent reported in the *Daily Worker*: "Civil war is still raging here." [48] After a few days, the Harlan story dropped out of the paper again. Then J. Louis Engdahl, head of the International Labor Defense, went down to Harlan to offer its aid to the indicted miners.[49] Meanwhile, the Communists were still preoccupied with their own coal strike in the Pittsburgh area. As this strike began to run down, however, they decided to call the representatives from all important coal fields to confer in Pittsburgh on July 15. Three weeks before the conference, the first NMU organizer, Dan Slinger, who used the name "Dan Brooks," appeared in Harlan County.[50] The strikers were so fed up with the UMW that he had little trouble convincing the local union, in a secret meeting, to send 25 delegates to the Pittsburgh conference. "Nobody has any use for the UMW after seeing how they've done us in [in] Harlan," one of them said. "Everybody is wanting to join the National Miners Union." [51] Three weeks later, the UMW phase of the strike was finished, and the NMU took over what was left of the Harlan strike.

In this curious way, the Communists came to Kentucky. Veterans of Gastonia, Lawrence, and the recently terminated Pennsylvania-Ohio-West Virginia strike slipped into the Harlan towns for another round of class struggle. Caroline Drew, the relief worker at Gastonia, came to organize NMU women's auxiliaries in Harlan. In August, she and Dan Brooks wrote back happily to the *Daily Worker*: "They [the Harlan miners] never heard of the Communist Party before this struggle and looked for friends of the working man. Now they say to hell with friends for votes, give us the Communist Party." [52] The ILD took up the defense of the 34 miners charged with murder. The name of Wagenknecht's committee was stretched to include another state—the Pennsylvania-Ohio-West Virginia-Kentucky Striking Miners' Relief.

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[47] *Harlan Miners Speak* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1932), p. vii.
[48] *Daily Worker,* May 21, 1931, p. 3.
[49] *Ibid.,* June 12, 1931, p. 1.
[50] Foster, *From Bryan to Stalin, op. cit.,* p. 232, refers to Dan Slinger as head of the Harlan delegation. "Dan Brooks" is the name used by Charles Rumford Walker in *Harlan Miners Speak, op. cit.,* p. 45, and the same name appears as co-author of an article in the *Daily Worker,* August 12, 1931, p. 4.
[51] *Daily Worker,* July 17, 1931, p. 1.
[52] *Ibid.,* August 12, 1931, p. 4.

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The *Daily Worker* was filled with front-page headlines, such as: "Boss Gunmen Kill 2 More in Harlan, Ky.; Relief Need Greater." [53]

The veteran Tom Myerscough told what it was like to be an NMU organizer in Kentucky. With Jim Grace, a local union contact, he was taken for an unwanted ride. "After being searched no fewer than six times between nine o'clock Friday night at Neon, Ky., where we were arrested and about 4 o'clock Saturday morning on top of a big mountain near Larue, Va., where we were taken from the car and again 'looked over' to make sure we had no arms, Jim Grace and I were 'invited' to fight by three heavily armed Harlan County thugs to whom we had been turned over by the thugs of Letcher County," he related. As they drove on, Jim Grace said: "This ain't the road to Harlan. It's atop the Big Mountain on the road to Appalachia. They're a fixin' to kill us." Myerscough went over the side of the mountain down a trail, chased by bullets. Darkness and a heavy rain enabled him to get away. "Daybreak," he continued, "found me soaked to the skin with rain and mud, my clothes by this time torn almost to shreds and I did not know where in hell I was. For several hours, I was just lost that's all." When he found where he was, he was picked up by the "law" in Virginia, handcuffed, taken to a doctor who told him the good news that none of his bones were broken, and ordered to "scram." After finding refuge in a nearby town, he painfully scribbled a report to headquarters. "I'm glad I'm able to," he concluded, "also that I'll still be able to do more for the NMU and the working class generally alive, than I would otherwise, for if they would have managed to plug me over that mountain, they'd never have been able to find me to hold a Red funeral." [54] Jim Grace also managed to escape, though badly hurt. When his wife found him, she recalled, "his face and eyes were swollen and black and blue. He was crazy as a loon." For Jim Grace, it was safer to go North and get relief work in New York.[55]

Bad as conditions had been in the Pittsburgh area, they were far worse in Kentucky. The striking miners were systematically blacklisted, terrorized by hired gunmen, starved into submission. Having rid themselves of the UMW, the coal operators were in no mood to put up with the more terrible Communists. The latter had to go into totally alien territory without the semblance of an organizational base. There was not a single functioning party unit in the entire state of Kentucky. The NMU attracted unemployed, blacklisted miners who were no longer in a position to shut down the mines. An ILD organizer, Jessie Wakefield, 23 years of age, was thrown into jail for five weeks. Reinforcements arrived during the fall, mainly from the auxiliaries, no more than a dozen in all. This small, beleaguered group of outsiders expected to lead a strike of 20,000 miners.[56]

V

The Communists were caught in a cruel dilemma. On the one hand, they wanted to maintain and to expand their influence among the Kentucky miners who were desperate enough to want another strike. On the other hand, the party leadership in New York and the NMU leadership in Pittsburgh had burned their fingers with so many mine strikes that they were afraid to gamble on another one in the most unpropitious circumstances. A confidential report to the party's Secretariat in New York in September 1931 gave some idea of what the Communist organizers on the spot were up against. Referring to mass arrests carried out the previous month, the report advised that "everything collapsed for a time; there was no functioning Party, no meetings of miners' locals,

[53] *Ibid.*, September 1, 1931, p. 1.
[54] *Ibid.*, October 3, 1931, p. 4.
[55] *Harlan Miners Speak, op. cit.*, pp. 95–96, 104.
[56] Tom Johnson, *Daily Worker*, March 9–11, 1932; Stachel, the *Communist*, June 1932, pp. 529–30.

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nothing in fact except submission to repeated raids upon miners' homes, searches, seizures, shootings, etc." Nevertheless, the NMU had succeeded on September 14 in holding a conference in Lexington, Kentucky, to which 125 delegates came from southeastern Kentucky, Tennessee, and Virginia. "When we consider the fact that the conference itself had to be organized secretly because of the terror, and that the men who attended knew they were risking their lives, we can get some idea of the determination that pervades the miners and their willingness to put up a fight," the Secretariat was informed. The report recommended a strike: "As far as the willingness of the miners to fight is concerned, I might add here that there is no question about that. They will fight, with or without our leadership." [57]

Another message at the end of October 1931 showed how difficult the decision was. "Relief cut down to practically nothing," it stated. "All the kitchens but one closed in the last few weeks, the one operating is operating on credit." Nevertheless, a delegation of Harlan miners had agreed that "70–80% of the miners demand a state-wide strike in the immediate future." The writer complained: "Difficulty in the miners understanding our policy of talking organization for strike and when they are ready to strike see no concrete steps taken to prepare for strike and cessation of all work." This message warned: "Center will have to make immediate *decision.* This is a situation certainly new in our history where workers demand a mass strike and we hold them back for weeks waiting for center to take action." Without a strike, it would become extremely difficult "to reestablish confidence in the union." [58]

But other Communist leaders in the region held back. Slinger was taken out of Harlan because he supported the Harlan miners, who wanted to set an early, definite date for a strike call. Organizers were in such short supply that he was not replaced for two months. The official line did not rule out a strike but insisted that more adequate organizational preparations were necessary to avoid another Illinois debacle. A successful strike hinged on sufficient strike relief, and little was as yet coming into the Harlan area from the outside. Slinger's group was sternly told that "they must not play with general strike slogans and with dates. First prepare a minimum of organizational machinery and then, if there was any possibility of launching a fight, we would issue the general strike call, and even set a date. But under no circumstances would we enter blindly into such a venture—because venture it surely would be." [59]

Yet pressure for a strike continued to build up. The party Secretariat in New York decided early in November that no final decision could be made there and that those in direct contact with the Harlan situation were expected to make it. The latter were told, however, to hold a "truly representative" conference in the strike area to make the final decision.[60] A conference was held

[57] This letter, dated September 18, 1931, was sent from the nearest Communist headquarters in Chattanooga, Tenn. The copy in my possession is unsigned, but a later letter of October 31, 1931, identified the writer as Clara Holden who represented the ILD. It was part of a file on the Harlan strike which I found in the private papers of Harry M. Wicks, then district organizer in Chattanooga. In 1958, after his death, Mrs. Ruth Wicks permitted me to examine his desk, which had been left untouched, and to take all the material in it of interest to me. A report of the Lexington meeting appeared in the *Daily Worker* of September 15, 1931, p. 2.

[58] Letter of October 28, 1931, from Pineville, Ky., signed by "S. Bowen," identified in a later letter of October 31, 1931, as Clara Holden [Wicks Papers].

[59] This letter was sent to the Secretariat in New York from Chattanooga, Tenn., dated October 28, 1931. This copy is unsigned, but later correspondence indicated that it was written by Jim [James S.] Allen, then editor of the *Southern Worker*, who played a leading role in working out Harlan strategy [Wicks Papers].

[60] This letter, dated November 5, 1931, was addressed to Harry Jackson, Jim Allen, Dan Slinger, Clara Holden. It was signed by T. J. [Tom Johnson], then in the Organization Department at Communist headquarters in New York [Wicks Papers].

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on November 27, 1931, but it postponed the issue by calling a district convention of the National Miners Union in Pineville, Ky., on December 13. This convention took the final step and decided on a strike throughout eastern Kentucky on January 1, 1932.[61]

The strike never had a chance. "Comrades," NMU Secretary Frank Borich began his confidential report on the course of the strike to the party's top leadership in New York, "it is obvious now that the expectations of the Party in connection with the Kentucky strike were not fulfilled. We were not able to organize a solid strike in the Kentucky coal fields and then spread it to other southern coal fields as was expected at the time the strike was prepared." He told a doleful story of how little real preparation had gone into the strike. The union had concentrated on signing up blacklisted miners who were not actually organized after they had signed application cards and who were mainly interested in obtaining relief. The blacklisted miners had assured the NMU organizers that the working miners were sure to come out on strike, and most of the pressure had come from the former. "Practically no campaign was carried on outside of the convention call and maybe distributing some copies of the Daily Worker." It was an NMU, not a miners' strike. "We did not convince the miners that this was a strike against terror and starvation, but it simply was a strike called by the NMU and therefore it would take care of them as soon as they joined the strike." The biggest mistake, Borich thought, was the lack of effort to build the party. When the strike took place, he said, "there were approximately twenty Party members in the entire field, themselves not organized into the Union, who were scattered and were not functioning as a Party unit in any respect, and this was during the period of preparation."

Borich's report to the party's top leaders would have confirmed the Communists' unkindest critics in their suspicions of how irresponsibly some of the Communists' most dramatic strikes were called. In the end, destitute, desperate miners paid most for the Communists' "mistakes."

Borich claimed a turnout of approximately 10,000, of whom about 4,000 were blacklisted, on January 1. Other figures were much lower, with a much higher percentage of unemployed and blacklisted. The strike, Borich said, was able to spread for a week, then lost its momentum. The strikers counted on getting relief and, when they were disappointed, drifted away. As soon as the strike started, Borich related, "hundreds of committees came in from various mines asking if there was enough relief, and if the Union was able to give enough relief, the mines were able to come out on strike, but, if not, they stated they would wait until relief came in." He cited one mine employing about 450 miners—"they came out when we sent relief but went back when we could not give relief." [62]

On January 4, the NMU headquarters in Pineville, Ky., were raided and nine of the outside organizers—five of them women—seized.[63] Two others were able to get away but had to move out of the strike zone to stay out of jail. From then on the strike was virtually leaderless because it depended almost entirely on outside direction. Foster, Borich, and Wagenknecht rushed down to set up a new strike leadership. They were forced

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[61] The call appeared in the *Daily Worker,* December 2, 1931, pp. 1, 3. The conference was reported in the issues of December 15 and 17, 1931, pp. 1, 3.

[62] Borich's unpublished report was made to the Politburo on January 28, 1932. It filled almost 12 mimeographed pages.

A coal operators' representative claimed that "not over 6 men in the county stopped working," and he may have been right (*Conditions in Coal Fields in Harlan and Bell Counties, Kentucky, op. cit.,* p. 203). Stachel made the same point (in the *Communist,* June 1932, p. 529).

[63] Their names, some of them obviously pseudonyms, were given in the *Daily Worker,* January 5, 1932, pp. 1, 3. John Harvey, Vincent Kamenovich, and Clarina Michaelson represented the NMU, others the *Daily Worker* (Vern Smith), ILD, and WIR.

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to call the meeting in Knoxville, Tennessee, some distance from the strike area. Pretending that they were arranging for a gathering of tobacco growers, they rented a small hall in the center of town. Unfortunately, the Harlan delegation arrived at ten thirty that night, long after meetings usually began in Knoxville. The hall-keeper became suspicious and called the police. Fortunately, Wagenknecht was able to talk them out of trouble. The three Communists later learned that the Kentucky miners had brought guns to shoot their way out if the police tried to arrest them. "I have often speculated," Foster later reflected, "on the tragic consequences that might have ensued had that Knoxville police official been less responsive to Wagenknecht's persuasive tongue." [64]

One young Communist was less lucky. He was the Young Communist League organizer Harry Simms, who had started out in life as Harry Hirsh. His short political career showed how unlikely were some of the roads that led to the Kentucky mine fields. He came from a Jewish working-class family in Springfield, Mass., where he spent his first 17 years. After leaving high school, he was briefly employed as an office worker and in a textile mill. He met some Communists, read their literature, and joined the tiny YCL in Springfield in 1928. In the next two years, he went from unit organizer to the District Training School to YCL district organizer in Connecticut. Arrested during the March 6, 1930, demonstration of unemployed in Waterbury, Conn., he spent six months in jail. Later that year, he volunteered for the dangerous Southern assignment and was shifted to Chattanooga, Tenn., as district organizer. In his new post, he was known as "Harris Gilbert." When the NMU wanted a youth organizer in Harlan the following year, the union asked for him, and "Harris Gilbert" became "Harry Simms," doubling as organizer for both the YCL and NMU. He succeeded in setting up a few, small YCL units and even in holding the Kentucky Youth Strike Conference in Pineville. On the morning after this conference, February 10, 1932, Simms and a local section organizer, Green Lawson, were walking along a railroad track on their way to a meeting. A hand-propelled railroad car with two deputy sheriffs approached, and as they stepped out of the way, one of the deputies shot Simms in the abdomen. Simms bled for hours near the tracks before he was taken to a hospital, where he died the next evening. It was a cold-blooded murder for which the killer was never brought to trial. The body was taken to New York and lay in state for a day at the Communist headquarters. After all this, Harry Hirsh Simms was all of 19 years old.[65] The circumstances in Harlan were so adverse that whatever the Communists did there seems somewhat incredible. Apart from the mine operators' fearful, unyielding opposition, their greatest problem was the miners themselves. One Communist organizer reflected: "The left wing of the American labor movement had never gained a foothold in these hills—the Communist Party was unknown and the Communist program undreamed of. Generations of isolation [have] made the miners highly individualistic with highly developed racial and social prejudices." [66] When the Communists first came, the miners knew so little about them that they did not distinguish them from any other union organizers, except that they seemed to fight harder and longer. But the mineowners, the local newspapers, the churches, and the courts saw to it that this state of ignorance did not last. They vastly preferred making

[64] *Pages from a Worker's Life, op. cit.*, p. 184.

[65] This paragraph is based mainly on Preval Glusman, "Harry Simms—A Young Revolutionist," *Daily Worker*, May 8, 1934, p. 5. Simms was first described as an NMU youth organizer, but was later identified as a YCL organizer, too (*ibid.*, February 11 and 13, 1932, p. 1). Glusman stated that Simms went to Chattanooga from Connecticut; the story in the February 13, 1932, issue said that he went to Birmingham, Alabama, and then to Kentucky. Glusman gave the assumed name as "Gilbert Harris," but letters in the Wicks Papers were signed "Harris Gilbert."

[66] Tom Johnson, *Daily Worker*, March 9, 1931, p. 4.

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Communism the issue instead of abysmally low wages and abominable working conditions.

To their surprise, the miners learned that Communists did not believe in God. When one Communist organizer was asked in court, "Do you believe in any form of religion?" she replied: "I believe in the religion of the workers. These workers here have relied on your religion for bread and butter, and now they are starving and you ask these workers to believe in religion." [67] The trouble with this approach was that the Harlan miners were fundamentalist in religion, and starvation was unlikely to make unbelievers of them. Some of the leading local union members were sent North for training, and they came back with tales of Communist godlessness and belief in equality for Negroes that made the best anti-Communist propaganda. One of them was Findley Donaldson, the NMU's local chairman, an active member of the Holiness Church, who liked to boast that he had read the Bible through at least 20 times. When he came back from his training course in Chicago, he issued a statement about what he had learned. He had seen Communists "with great applause give honor to Soviet Russia" and had heard them teach that "there is no God; no Jesus; no resurrection of the dead; all there is for anybody is what they get in this world." He would never have affiliated with the National Miners Union and the Communist party if he had known what their teachings were, and he indignantly condemned them for misleading him and his friends "as I fully believe in God and the United States." A serious study made some time later by an investigator who had worked with the American Friends Service Committee, which had provided relief for miners' children, found that denunciations by Donaldson and others sent North for training had done more than anything else to hurt the Communist cause. This study judged them to be the "deathblow" to the NMU in Kentucky and "far more effective in smashing the union than the National Guard ever could have been." [68] Another outside observer was convinced that the strike was broken "less by guns and whips than by the rock-ribbed fundamentalism of the miners." [69]

Inevitably, the "Negro question" also arose. According to Borich, no more than 2 percent of the Kentucky miners were Negroes, and about 350–400 Negro miners went out on strike. A "very sharp issue" soon bedeviled the strikers—should Negroes eat in the same soup kitchens or sit at the same tables with the white miners? Borich related:

> We called a special meeting of 25 leading comrades to discuss this and I spoke for about an hour explaining in detail the position of the Party, and when I was through it was the Negro miners who were the first to speak against it. There were only 3 Negroes there and they all spoke against the Negroes and the whites eating in the same kitchen, and they spoke on the following grounds: that in the South there is a law which does not permit Negroes and whites to mix together in social affairs, and that the coal operators and armed forces will use this as a pretense to smash the strike, and we should not give them this opportunity. They said we should give them what we can to eat at home and we should eat in the kitchen.

On this point, however, the Communists were adamant. After six or seven hours of discussion, they succeeded in convincing the miners that all of them, irrespective of color, should eat in the same kitchen. Borich added slyly: "We did not say they must eat at the same table, and this was a manoeuvre on

[67] Malcolm Ross, *Machine Age in the Hills* (New York: Macmillan, 1933), pp. 183–85.

[68] Homer Lawrence Morris, *The Plight of the Bituminous Coal Miner* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1934), pp. 135–37. The author was then Professor of Economics, Fisk University.

[69] Ross, *op. cit.*, p. 185.

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our part." [70] It is fair to say that only the Communists in that period, in the heat of battle, would have taken such a firm stand on this issue.

But the strike itself was a calamity. The Communists themselves later admitted that it had been a mistake. The TUUL's second-in-command, Jack Stachel, recognized that "we were wrong in calling the strike when we did, with the preparations that we had carried through." In the inevitable self-criticism, he gave nine reasons why the strike should not have been called, mainly to the effect that unemployed, blacklisted workers could not carry out a strike inside the mines. The strike, he decided, should have been called off in the very first days as soon as it was seen that it was "in reality no strike except for the unemployed blacklisted miners." Instead, it was dragged out futilely until the end of March and merely increased the number of blacklisted miners. He sadly noted that the support mobilized from the outside among miners and workers in general had been "quite inadequate." [71] One of the most costly mistakes, made again and again, was the tendency to oversell what the Communists and their auxiliaries could do for the strikers. The official pamphlet of the Workers International Relief on the strike, written by a *Daily Worker* reporter, extolled it in grandiose terms—"builds immense solidarity movements in all cities and industrial centers"; "organizes workers' children's camps where children of the unemployed and of strikers are taken care of without charge"; "gives medical aid to workers injured at demonstrations." [72] When promises such as these were not fulfilled, the propaganda backfired.

The Communists could never go back to Harlan. Most miners agreed with those who said: "The unions have made conditions in Harlan County a whole lot worse than they were." "But the union couldn't get any place in this depression—I'm done with the organization—the men won't stick." "Then after they got us all out and blacklisted, they left us flat." "There ain't no use in the world for the poor men to fight the men who have the money." "I am agin' the Reds. They are agin' God and I am agin' them. They caused a lot of trouble through here. They got men out and tore up the mines." "I've had plenty of the union. I'm in sympathy with them but I don't expect to stay with them any more." "I'm through with unions. I went out down here last year, now every time I go to get a job they think I'm an agitator and won't take me on." "If the boss knew you wanted a union, he'd fire you right away. But the way things are now you wouldn't lose much." [73]

VI

Yet, in one respect, the Communists did something for the miners that no one else had ever done. They could do little for them in Kentucky but much for them elsewhere. For decades, the Kentucky miners had suffered the most appalling poverty and degradation with hardly any attention paid to them. In a few months, the Communists made up for years of neglect. Thanks largely to them, Harlan County became a byword for industrial oppression. The Communists were much better at getting publicity for the miners and, incidentally, for themselves than at anything else.

Getting publicity in Harlan County was almost as hard and dangerous as waging strikes. Two journalists were shot in the leg to discourage news sympathetic to the strikers from getting out. Others received threatening notes. A representative of the American Civil Liberties Union was jailed. The local press was full of inflammatory threats against outside "agitators" who, as one paper

[70] Borich report to the Politburo, January 28, 1932, p. 5.
[71] Jack Stachel, the *Communist*, June 1932, pp. 528–32.
[72] Harry Gannes, *Kentucky Miners Fight* (New York: Workers International Relief, 1932), pp. 30–31.
[73] Morris, *op. cit.*, pp. 128–130.

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advocated editorially, should be deported, "made to face a firing squad," or "be much safer in a pine box six feet under ground." A vaguely worded and even more loosely interpreted "criminal syndicalism" state law made it possible to arrest and hold almost anyone arbitrarily. The *Daily Worker* might be mailed and sold legally in the United States, but in Harlan County mere possession of a copy was enough to be held and convicted on the all-purpose charge of "criminal syndicalism." [74]

Nevertheless, the Communists found ways to break through this crude, bloodstained system of repression. Since one of the three organizers first sent to Harlan had represented the International Labor Defense and had been one of the first jailed for "criminal syndicalism," the ILD was too well-known as a Communist auxiliary to serve as vehicle for investigating conditions in the Kentucky mine fields. This role was taken over by the National Committee for the Defense of Political Prisoners, a new auxiliary formed in mid-1931. It was able to get as its chairman the famous novelist Theodore Dreiser, then a recent convert to Communism as a solution "for the difficulties of the world, and particularly those in America." [75] The sixty-year-old Dreiser courageously led a group of eight, including another well-known novelist, John Dos Passos, into the explosively hostile territory of Pineville, the seat of neighboring Bell County, and Harlan itself. For two days in November, Dreiser and the others interrogated witnesses who told sickening stories of outrage and despair. Dreiser was such an impressive figure that even the Harlan sheriff and prosecuting attorney submitted to questioning.[76] The committee's hearings were reported from coast to coast and brought Harlan County to the consciousness of millions who had never heard of it before. If the miners were not enough for a good story, Dreiser helped by getting himself indicted on a charge of adultery.[77]

In February 1932, while the Communist phase of the strike was still going on, Waldo Frank led a group of 12, mainly writers, including Edmund Wilson and Malcolm Cowley, into the strike area. They arrived in Pineville the day Harry Simms was shot, were arrested that same evening, forced into cars and taken for a ride of about 20 miles to the Cumberland Gap at the Kentucky-Tennessee border, where they were put out at the top of a mountain in the dead of night. Waldo Frank and Allan Taub, an ILD lawyer picked up at the same time, were severely beaten. The group was prevented from distributing food which it had brought along, but nothing could prevent it from making known to the world how law and order were observed in Bell County.[78]

Students, clergymen, and liberals organized other pilgrimages to Harlan and Bell counties. The student delegation was spon-

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[74] The two journalists were Bruce Crawford, editor and publisher of *Crawford's Weekly* of Norton, Virginia, and Boris Israel of the Federated Press. The American Civil Liberties representative was Arnold Johnson. Their stories and the other details in this paragraph may be found in *Harlan Miners Speak, op. cit.*, pp. 59–82, 233–34.

[75] W. A. Swanberg, *Dreiser* (New York: Scribner's, 1965), p. 370.

[76] The testimony appears in *Harlan Miners Speak.* The committee was made up of Dreiser, John Dos Passos, Lester Cohen, Samuel Ornitz, Bruce Crawford, Melvin P. Levy, Charles Rumford Walker, and Adelaide Walker. All were writers of one kind or another.

[77] Swanberg, *op. cit.*, p. 387. This was the famous "toothpick incident." Dreiser came to Kentucky with an unidentified, attractive young woman. When she went into his room one night, toothpicks were placed against his door. When they were found undisturbed the next morning, they became evidence for his indictment on a charge of adultery. John Dos Passos gave an account of the trip in the *New Republic*, December 2, 1931, pp. 62–67.

[78] Frank and Taub told their experiences at a Senatorial hearing (*Harlan Miners Speak, op. cit.*, pp. 313–48). Taub and Cowley later testified in *Conditions in Coal Fields in Harlan and Bell Counties, Kentucky, op. cit.*, pp. 37–61. Cowley also gave his version of the events in the *New Republic*, March 2, 1932, pp. 67–70, and Wilson in the *New Masses*, April 1932, p. 7.

Besides Frank, Wilson, and Cowley, the group was made up of Mary Heaton Vorse, Polly Boyden, Benjamin Lieder, Dr. Elsie Reed Mitchell, John Henry Hammond, Jr., Liston M. Oak, Quincy Howe, A. M. Max, and Harold Hickerson.

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sored by the National Student League, another newly formed auxiliary. In March, about 80 students, mainly from New York, were turned back near the Kentucky border, some of them roughed up in the act.[79] In May, two non-Communist groups followed —one for the American Civil Liberties Union, headed by Arthur Garfield Hays, which was also turned back, and another made up of four ministers, headed by Professor Reinhold Niebuhr, who succeeded in spending two days in the Pineville area.[80] Finally, in May, a Senatorial subcommittee conducted hearings on conditions in the coal fields of Harlan and Bell counties and gave members of these delegations an opportunity to tell their stories in the nation's capital.

For months, the press was full of Harlan as it had never been before. Most of the publicity came after the Communists had arrived on the scene and, therefore, unavoidably mentioned them or the NMU in connection with the events. The *New York Times,* for example, carried only six stories dealing with the Kentucky miners in the UMW or pre-Communist phase of the struggle. But it devoted about 120 stories to the subject after the Communists became part of it.[81] The liberal weeklies began to take an interest in the strike only after the Communists had taken it over. The *Nation* was especially one-sided in its treatment. It published an article by a Communist who gave the impression that the NMU had succeeded in organizing the miners not only of Harlan County but "of all Kentucky and Tennessee" —after the Harlan strike itself was a lost cause. Another article extolling the strike was published three months after it had been officially called off.[82] The *New Republic* was far more evenhanded, though it also tended to exaggerate the headway made by the NMU.[83]

As a result, the Communists benefited enormously from the publicity given to the Harlan strike, even though they admitted to themselves that they should not have called it in the first place. Whatever the result, they were given credit for invading the most fearsome enemy territory and putting up a good, hard fight before surrendering to overpowering forces of evil. On the other hand, Harlan was still another case of trying to do too much with too little. Once they were driven out, the Communists could never return. For all their fortitude and determination, they had nothing concrete to show for their efforts. After Harlan, the NMU seemed exhausted, incapable of further challenging its hated rival, the UMW. At the end of a year of furious, if ill-fated, struggles, the NMU was, for all practical purposes, finished.

In March 1932, the NMU took stock at its third national convention. Borich admitted that the union was now made up mainly of unemployed and blacklisted miners. He traced the trouble back to the mistakes made in the Pennsylvania-Ohio-West Virginia strike the year before.[84] Two months later, he called attention to the new wave of mine strikes that had recently broken

[79] Rob Hall, *Conditions in Coal Fields in Harlan and Bell Counties, Kentucky, op. cit.,* pp. 20–27, and the *Student Review,* May 1932, pp. 7–9; Charles Croix, *New Masses,* May 1932, pp. 9–12; James Wechsler, *Revolt on the Campus* (New York: Covici-Friede, 1935), pp. 100–105.

[80] Hays and Niebuhr testified in *Conditions in Coal Fields in Harlan and Bell Counties, Kentucky, op. cit.,* pp. 85–95, 215–52.

[81] The *New York Times* carried six references to the Kentucky mine situation between January 1 and May 15, 1931; 57 between August 7 and December 28, 1931; and 62 in 1932.

[82] The first was Oakley Johnson, "Starvation and the 'Reds' in Kentucky," the *Nation,* February 3, 1932, pp. 141–43; the second was J. C. Byars, Jr., "Harlan County: Act of God," *ibid.,* June 15, 1932, p. 673. A subsequent letter by Tess Huff protested that the NMU was no longer in Harlan (*ibid.,* July 13, 1932, pp. 37–38), but the *Nation* itself preferred to drop the subject without clearing up the confusion.

[83] From an editorial in the issue of August 5, 1931: "The rapid growth of the militant N.M.U. in the East is surely an important sign of a shift in the balance of power between coal capitalists and the old-line labor politicians" (p. 302).

[84] Nathaniel Honig, "Miners Discuss their Problems," *Labor Unity,* April 1932, pp. 19–20.

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out—25,000 anthracite workers of whom 15,000 were holding out in eastern Ohio and West Virginia, and some 50,000 in Illinois. Yet the UMW, not the NMU, was leading these strikes. In fact, the NMU was playing an "insignificant role" and was suffering from "an almost complete isolation." [85] Another Communist organizer estimated that close to 100,000 miners were striking by the summer of 1932—all under UMW leadership. What hurt most was the strike in the eastern Ohio-West Virginia region, which the NMU had had all to itself the year before. Now the NMU was down nationally to a dues-paying membership of less than 500, who were unable to support 18 full-time union officials, none of them receiving regular wages and many of them going hungry regularly. The trouble, as Borich explained it, was endemic to Communist auxiliaries. Reduced to their hard core of Communists, the NMU's locals were behaving like party units under another name. "Local meetings," he complained, "become kind of social gatherings where old friends meet to chew over and rehash internal problems and squabbles of every phase of the revolutionary movement." The situation was so bad, he reported, that some party members feared with some justification that the NMU was in danger of being "wiped out." [86]

That the traitorous, moribund UMW of John L. Lewis should show signs of revival in 1932 caught the NMU's faithful totally by surprise. They had been accustomed to think of the UMW as a strike-breaking agency and of its officials as serving no other purpose than "to outscab the scabs." [87] One explanation for the NMU's absence in east Ohio in 1932 was the belief of its members that "it was not possible for the United Mine Workers of America to lead a strike in that field." [88] Even more galling, the NMU had opened the way for the UMW in east Ohio. According to a Communist organizer, an NMU leaflet in one eastern Ohio mine had brought out the workers, the NMU had heedlessly left the area, the UMW had moved in, the strike had spread to the entire mine field, and the UMW had found itself leading thousands of miners in the former NMU territory.[89] Even where the miners continued to rebel against the UMW, the NMU did not benefit. In September 1932, the Progressive Miners of America arose to challenge the UMW in Illinois. After some wavering, the Communists decided to support the PMA nominally but to attack its leadership politically. The attacks were far more in evidence than the support.[90]

In 1933, the Communists gave up all pretense that they had a functioning miners' union. In January, Borich complained that some of the leading organizers were burned out, asking for leaves of absence or staying home.[91] Mine strikes abounded in almost every mine field in the latter half of the year, but the Communists took credit for only one in New Mexico and Utah.[92] In western Pennsylvania, where they had conducted the greatest strike in their history two years before, 75,000 miners went out again. This time the Communists were not a factor. "In the mining district our Party as a Party is

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[85] Frank Borich, "What's Happening in Ohio—and Why," *ibid.*, May 1932, pp. 16–17.
[86] Tom Johnson, "The Fight Against Sectarianism in the National Miners Union," The *Communist*, August 1932, pp. 697–704.
[87] Honig, *op. cit.*, p. 20.
[88] Stachel, *Labor Unity*, October 1932, p. 14.
[89] Tom Johnson, *Daily Worker*, May 28, 1932, p. 4.
[90] The fullest discussion of the Communist position vis-à-vis the Progressive Miners of America is in S. Willner, "The Lessons of the Illinois Miners' Strike," the *Communist*, November 1932, pp. 1029–47. For a more typical attack on the PMA leadership as tainted with Musteism, see Bill Gebert, *Labor Unity*, January 1933, pp. 6–8. This did not prevent John L. Lewis's machine from also attacking the PMA as Communist with the slogan, "Down with the Reds!" (Harriet D. Hudson, *The Progressive Mine Workers of America: A Study of Rival Unionism* [Urbana: University of Illinois, 1952], p. 27).
[91] F. Borich, *Daily Worker*, February 7, 1933, p. 4.
[92] "The Strike Waves in the Mines," *Labor Unity*, October 1933, pp. 13–14.

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not in existence as far as the strikers are concerned," one organizer grieved. "Our Party is composed almost exclusively of the black-listed, foreign-born miners." [93] Borich himself was deported in October.[94] By the end of the year, a party—not a union—conference of mine organizers decided that the unexpected growth of the UMW made it imperative to "work for the unity of the miners into one militant united miners' union." [95] In practice, this meant giving up the NMU and leaving the field to the UMW.

It was the death knell of the National Miners Union. The NMU had anticipated the birth of the Trade Union Unity League by about a year, and now it anticipated the death of the TUUL by at least a year.

VII

What went wrong? Why was the Communist mine union so disappointing?

Traditional trade unionism had held that a depression was the worst time to strike and organize. The Communists scoffed at the prevailing view and deliberately defied past experience. They fought it mercilessly in their own ranks as defeatist and fatalistic, unworthy of revolutionists. Vacillating party members were berated for betraying a lack of faith in "the growing radicalization and revolutionizing of the masses in the U.S.A." [96]

The Communists showed that it was possible to launch strikes or to jump on the bandwagon of spontaneous strikes. But they could not show that it was possible for them to win strikes or to gain concessions for the workers who followed them. They were unable or unwilling to end strikes quickly, and long strikes demanded relief funds which they did not prepare in advance and which were far beyond their capacity to raise in the course of the strike. They were allergic to compromises, and employers were usually determined not to compromise with them. Without victories, even partial ones, they were incapable of holding workers together beyond the heat of the battle. A Communist mine strike was an all-or-nothing gamble. When it won nothing, the NMU was left with unemployed and blacklisted miners. Once it had lost, it could never go back to the same mine fields. John L. Lewis's UMW was quiescent and craven during the worst of the Depression, but it was able to survive and in the end to benefit most from the Communists' exertions.

All unions were fought bitterly in those days. But the most brutal terror was reserved for the Communist unions. Mine companies, courts, police and military, local, state, and national officials combined forces against them. In the face of such a phalanx of powerful and implacable enemies, it was more surprising that the Communist organizers were able to fight so hard for as long as they did than that they were unable to win. Nevertheless, grim experience soon taught mine workers that they were looking for the maximum trouble by striking under Communist leadership. An elementary sense of self-preservation cautioned them that, if it was necessary to strike at all, it was best to do so under less provocative and vulnerable auspices.

The Communists themselves exacerbated this problem by identifying their unions so closely with the party. They were insistently exhorted "to bring the face of the party forward" and to count no union campaign a success that did not bring in party members and failed to increase the party's influence. The top union leaders were also party leaders; they wore two hats and put on one or the other as circumstances dictated. If any

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[93] B. Frank, *Party Organizer,* November 1933, p. 8.

[94] *Daily Worker,* October 25, 1933, p. 1.

[95] J. Stachel, *ibid.,* December 21, 1933, pp. 1–2. According to Foster, the movement for unity among the miners started in the middle of 1933 (*From Bryan to Stalin, op. cit.,* p. 272), and still later he claimed that the Communists "joined forces with the miners in their drive to re-establish the U.M.W.A." early in 1933 (*History of the Communist Party of the United States, op. cit.,* p. 303). This would indicate that the Communists virtually gave up the NMU months before this conference.

[96] S. Willner, the *Communist,* November 1932, p. 1044.

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proof were needed of the union's allegiance to the party, the union was sure to provide it during election campaigns. One such mine union statement endorsed and wholeheartedly supported "the election platform of the only working class party, the Communist Party." It concluded: "Long live the Communist Party! VOTE COMMUNIST!" [97] Freeman Thompson, national president of the NMU, was the Communist candidate for senator from Illinois.[98] No one needed to pin the Communist label on the TUUL unions; they would have felt politically naked without it.

As long as the "third period" prevailed, the American Communists were deeply disturbed and puzzled by the failure of their trade unions to do better. They agreed that the objective conditions were most favorable and that the masses of workers were being revolutionized. But they also knew that their organizations lagged far behind. If the trouble was not in the objective conditions and not in the masses of workers, they told themselves, it must be in themselves. And they blamed themselves masochistically. They blamed their organizational methods, their sectarianism, their opportunism, their lack of trained forces, their personal shortcomings. The one thing they could not blame was the party line.

After the line changed and the Popular Front came in, Foster permitted himself the luxury of examining the TUUL's record a little more critically. The two main weaknesses, he found, were "a tendency, under the fierce attacks from its main enemies, to develop its union programs upon a too advanced revolutionary basis and to identify the organizations too closely with the Communist Party" and the "beginning of a tendency in the direction of dual unionism, the traditional weakness of the American left wing." [99] What Foster could not admit publicly was that without these two "tendencies," there would have been no TUUL. Its very program had committed it to the closest possible identification with the Communist party and the goal of dual unionism.[100] Any wavering from these built-in principles met with lashing scorn and retribution from Moscow. Whatever they may be called, these "tendencies" could not be challenged while the TUUL was still going strong without questioning its *raison d'être*.

In the original Leninist doctrine, the Communist party and the trade union movement were supposed to be clearly differentiated. In one of his late works, Lenin had maintained that trade unions were necessary to enable the Communists "to *convince* the backward elements, to be able to work *among* them, and not to *fence themselves off* from them by artificial and childishly 'Left-wing' slogans." [101] For this reason, he had argued, it was incumbent on Communists to work in "reactionary" trade unions rather than in their own "revolutionary" unions. According to the theory of the "third period," however, these admonitions had been rendered obsolete. History, in a sense, took revenge on the Communists for being unfaithful to their own doctrine.

Yet all would have been forgiven if the revolutionary upsurge had taken place as promised in the United States. There was, to be sure, an upsurge but it was not very revolutionary, and most of it took place after the "third period" was given up in favor of the Popular Front. Without being able to ride an ever-rising, irresistible revolutionary wave, the TUUL had to depend on the straining, sweating, and plodding of its own organizers. They were too few, and they tried to do too much. □

[97] *Daily Worker*, October 13, 1930, p. 2.
[98] *Labor Unity*, August 20, 1930, p. 9.
[99] *From Bryan to Stalin, op. cit.*, p. 278.
[100] From the program of the TUUL: "It supports the revolutionary political struggles and the political organizations of the working class, the Communist Party" and (under the heading of "The New Trade Union Center") "The new Trade Union Unity League has as its main task the organizing of the unorganized workers into industrial unions, independent of the A.F. of L." (*The Trade Union Unity League, op. cit.*, pp. 17, 22).
[101] *"Left-Wing" Communism: An Infantile Disorder* (New York: International Publishers, 1934), pp. 37–38, italics in original.

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Melvin Drimmer

Black Opera in Atlanta

A notable cultural event occurred in Atlanta on January 28 and 29 with the world premiere of *Treemonisha,* a long-neglected folk opera by the black ragtime composer Scott Joplin (1868–1917). Under the overall direction of Robert Shaw and the stage direction of the legendary dancer Katherine Dunham, the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra combined with an all-black company to give the opera a rousing production.

Joplin began writing *Treemonisha* around 1905, when he was at the height of his fame, "King of the Ragtime." With royalties from *Maple Leaf Rag* (1899), Joplin had moved in 1903 from Sedalia, Missouri, to St. Louis and bought a 13-room house in a good neighborhood. He gave up the life of itinerant musician for that of music teacher and composer. His output was considerable. In addition to numerous rags and songs, Joplin composed two operas, *A Guest of Honor,* written sometime around 1903, and *Treemonisha. A Guest of Honor,* which Joplin described as a "Ragtime Opera," was given a few performances in St. Louis, but the text has never been found by Joplin scholars.

In spite of his fame, Joplin was unable to have his most ambitious work, *Treemonisha,* commercially published or publicly performed. He became obsessed with the opera and in the last ten years of his life, spent in New York, he tried unsuccessfully to have *Treemonisha* produced. The closest he came to having the opera performed was in 1915 when he organized a concert version in Harlem, but little interest was shown. The reason, according to Professor Wendell Whalum of Morehouse College and musical director of the Atlanta production, was that the black middle and upper classes did not want to see their older ways portrayed.

In 1916 Joplin became mentally ill, and he died months later at Manhattan State Hospital. All that was to remain of the opera was the 230-page piano score, which Joplin published and copyrighted in 1911 at his own expense. Until the Atlanta production the opera remained both unorchestrated and unperformed.

Joplin's opera has to be seen in the context of American musical theater in the first two decades of this century. Reviewers missed the point when they judged it a poor imitation of European opera. Despite its obvious defects —absence of dramatic impact, no great arias— *Treemonisha* is a very original American production. It makes use of American themes and music and is a forerunner of what was later to be the best of American musical theater— *Porgy and Bess, Oklahoma,* and *Carousel. Treemonisha* has little in common with the sentimental light operas of Victor Herbert. An opera of plain black folk incorporating ragtime, American folk tunes, and even music of the circus, it was far ahead of its time.

Black theater in the 1900s was mostly the "coon" show. Black theater in New York was dominated by the figures of Bert Williams, George Walker, Bob Cole, J. Rosemund Johnson, Will Marion Cook, and Ernest Hogan. Once white actors had made a success out of imitating blacks and doing minstrellike shows, black performers also had to blacken their faces, do the cakewalk, and play to the stereotypes of white audiences.

Beginning in the late 1890s, black musicians and actors dominated the "coon" shows. Will Marion Cook's operetta *Clorindy: The Origin*

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of the Cake-Walk, with lyrics by Paul Laurence Dunbar, was produced in New York in 1898. In the next decade there appeared Bob Cole's and William Johnson's *A Trip to Coontown* (1898), Cook's *Jes Lak White Folks* (1899), Bert Williams's and George Walker's *Sons of Ham* (1899), and three very popular shows featuring Williams and Walker and written by Cook and Jesse Shipp, *In Dahomey* (1902), *Abyssinia* (1906), and *Bandanna Land* (1907). The black man featured in the shows was epitomized by the character Williams played in *Abyssinia.* According to one historian of the black theater, "Bert Williams played his typical role of the dull-witted, lazy, unlucky, uneducted Negro who always managed by some stroke of extraordinary stupidity to make the best laid plans go wrong" (Robert A. Isaacs, *The Negro in the American Theatre* [College Park, Md.: McGrath, 1947]).

Even in the 1920s, when a number of black musical shows appeared on Broadway, including the smash *Shuffle Along* (1921) by Eubie Blake and Noble Sissle, the material was little different. What saved these shows was the dancing, music, and songs. It should also be remembered that *Shuffle Along* featured the Broadway debuts of Josephine Baker and Florence Mills.

With this kind of "coon" show Joplin would have nothing to do. What he tried to do, however incomplete, was to create a black theater. Black theater is hard to define, but a good effort was made in 1926 by W. E. B. DuBois:

> Negro Theatre must be: I. *About us.* That is, they must have plots which reveal Negro life as it is. II. *By us.* That is, they must be written by Negro authors who understand from birth and continual association just what it means to be a Negro today. III. *For us.* That is, the theatre must cater principally to Negro audiences and be supported and sustained by their entertainment and approval. IV. *Near us.* The theatre must be in a Negro neighborhood near the mass of ordinary Negro people. [Quoted in Nathan Huggins, *Harlem Renaissance* (New York: Oxford University Press), 1971).]

Treemonisha has a totally American setting, that of black farmers immediately after Reconstruction (the opening scene is set in September 1884), living in an all-black community in Arkansas. This in fact is the same area where Joplin himself was born, in plantation country just north of Texarkana, Texas.

The opera celebrates the triumph of education over ignorance, enlightment over superstition. For Joplin education and enlightenment are represented in the heroine, Treemonisha, who espouses American-Christian values. Ignorance and superstition are represented by the conjuremen who, speaking in dialect, express older African values. The conjuremen sell roots and charms and try to get the people to believe in their folk medicine to ward off evil. Treemonisha, on the other hand, having been educated by a white lady (as Joplin had been educated by a German piano teacher), admonishes the conjuremen. Treemonisha warns the people that

> ignorance is criminal in this enlightened day,
> So let us get busy when once we've found the way.

The conjuremen kidnap Treemonisha, take her to the forest and decide to punish her. She is saved and in turn the conjuremen are captured, and the people decide to punish them. Treemonisha intercedes and asks the people to pardon them. The conjuremen see the evil of their ways and the opera ends with Treemonisha elected by the people to lead them out of ignorance and superstition.

This theme was in keeping with the thought of the black middle class at the time. What blacks needed, so the middle class maintained, was for the masses to adopt the prevailing American ethos. As Robert Bone has written about black literature of the time, constant stress was placed on "thrift and industry, initiative and perseverence, promptness and reliability; . . . a stern regard for duty, injunctions against idleness, and sober warnings against self-indulgence." (*The Negro Novel in America* [New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1958], p. 13.)

It is in the chorus that Joplin creates a new dimension in black theater—the chorus representing the black people dance to Afro-American music. With Katherine Dunham's imaginative choreography, the chorus creates a Midwestern hoe down, a West-Indian-style dance, and ragtime strut. And the two songs which stop the show, "And Dinah Has Blowed de Horn," and "A Real Slow Drag," represent black musical expression through and through and make no concession to European operatic forms.

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There are no black-faced buffoons in this opera. Treemonisha and her family are portrayed with dignity. They show a well-knit black family, magnanimous in victory and virtuous without being hypocritical. Remus, Treemonisha's husband, sums up their belief in the aria, "Wrong Is Never Right."

Never treat your neighbors wrong
By making them feel blue
Remember that the whole day long
The Creator is watching you.
Never do wrong for revenge
In the day or night
Wrong must not on right infringe
For Wrong is never right.

Joplin was part of a period in black history that laid the basis for the cultural nationalism of today. DuBois gave it definition in *Souls of Black Folk*. James Weldon Johnson wrote the black anthem in "Lift Ev'ry Voice and Sing." Carter G. Woodson put the black experience on a scientific basis. The Niagara movement and the NAACP indicated that blacks would no longer be satisfied with the political role defined for them by the white majority. In New York and Chicago blacks staked out the turf that was to form the basis for their political and cultural power. Jack Johnson's public defiance of the mores of America made him a champion for the new self-confident black man. Through ragtime Joplin gave expression to this self-confidence.

In *Treemonisha*, Joplin set out to create a musical theater that was American and black. He may not have succeeded because he was trying to mix these two cultures. But 60 years after its creation the opera serves as a reminder that these two "warring ideals," as DuBois called them, might still be resolved.

II

IN THE ATLANTA PREMIERE the black community played the key role. The production took place after a week-long Afro-American Musical Festival at Morehouse College. Sessions were devoted to Joplin, Paul Robeson, Eubie Black, and Noble Sissle, and to various aspects of African, Caribbean, and Afro-American music. The orchestration for the Joplin opera was brilliantly done by T. J. Anderson, the black composer-in-residence at Morehouse College. Dr. Wendell Whalum of Morehouse, musical director for the opera, chose local people for the chorus—a night clerk, two housewives, an auto worker, a school principal, three public schoolteachers, a secretary, students from Spelman and Morehouse, members of church choruses, and schoolchildren. Katherine Dunham, chief choreographer, brought to Atlanta members of her dance company now in residence at Southern Illinois University. The principal singers were Alpha Floyd, Seth McCoy, Louis Parker, and Simon Estes. And, very important, at least half of the capacity audiences for the two performances were black. The black bourgeoisie came out in force, stunningly dressed and coiffured, but black people also filled the balconies and mezzanine.

The principal white input came from Robert Shaw and the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra. Shaw has proved himself to be an important friend to the Atlanta black cultural scene. His orchestra has joined with black singers and choruses more than once in joint productions. Last year Shaw directed a performance of Beethoven's *Fidelio* with a black-white cast and a chorus from Spelman-Morehouse. The same week the symphony played the music for *Treemonisha*, they also performed at the Atlanta University Center in a concert devoted to six contemporary black composers. Only in Atlanta with its self-confident black community could so close a relationship develop between an all-black cast and artistic staff and the symphony.

The six black colleges of the Atlanta University Center have not always been so hospitable to black culture. For in the past the administrations of the Center colleges gave little institutional support or recognition to the black experience. It did not pay to be black, or so the faculty was told. Only recently have the black colleges in Atlanta begun to patronize black culture. Almost too late, the Center colleges have realized that they are the heirs to a rich inheritance.

In a time of integrated schools, when black students and scholars for the first time have the option of going elsewhere, black colleges must offer their students and communities more than the standard white educational fare: one of their chief reasons to exist should be to preserve and extend their own heritage. □

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Czechs, Ms., and Samizdat

George Moldau, "Inspired by Amalrik," SURVEY, August 1971

Three years after Russian tanks rolled across the border, the "consolidation" of a Soviet-controlled regime has been accomplished in Czechoslovakia. A tiny Communist party, operating without popular support, has stabilized the Czech economy at a low level of output, silenced the non-Party press, suppressed dissent.

A Czech using the pseudonym George Moldau describes how the Husak regime, though incapable of collecting rent checks on time, has been able to perform this tour de force.

First,

> All the working people in this country have been required to express agreement with the "consolidation process" and to append their signature to this more or less formal declaration, usually in front of a commission. Although they ridiculed the proceedings, in the end the overwhelming majority justified them rationally and presented themselves for screening, thereby sapping a further moral barrier within themselves. . . .

Second, the intellectuals were blackmailed. They were required to fill out forms describing their own errors and the errors of their colleagues. Some, perhaps a fifth, were then dismissed from their jobs. The rest were told that they could be dismissed at any time if they did not conform—the state had dossiers documenting their deviations.

Why did the Czechs submit? Moldau argues they are demoralized, believing resistance will do no good. This demoralization is partly based on history; the past 30 years have shown the Czechs they are too weak to determine their own destiny. The international situation reinforces their helplessness—the Czechs believe the West is indifferent to their plight. It must also be admitted that the Husak strategy has been brilliant; rather than taking a hard line, Husak's supporters "appealed to the common sense of the Czech intelligentsia, to their appraising the reality of a situation. . . ." Further, the total blackout of all news but official propaganda has made the people cynical and apathetic.

Finally, the purge, which forced people to inform on their colleagues, has made people not only loathe themselves, but also distrust each other.

The Czech intelligentsia possess a basic optimism that "things are so bad now they have to get better." They believe the economy is doing so badly, compared to Western European economies, that liberalization will be necessary in order to get it moving again. The common people, not being Marxist, and thus deprived of this basis for optimism, only hope they will be one day rid of "socialism" entirely.

Moldau's last and saddest conclusion is that "today it is possible to govern without open, brutally oppressive terror, and without a generally acceptable ideology. . . . The remarkable feature of this regime is that it does not require a consenting people at all in order to govern . . . and it is utterly impervious to what people think."

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MS., THE NEW MAGAZINE FOR WOMEN, January 1972

The preview issue of *Ms.*, with its bright red cover, looked exciting—the enormous energy of the Women's movement brought to focus in one place. And the articles seemed moderate and sound:

- In "On Raising Kids Without Sex Roles," Lotty Pogrebin examines how children learn what is expected of boys and of girls, and suggests ways in which parents can counteract the influence that toys, books, TV, and schools have in teaching boys and girls to do or not do things that all children really could and should do.
- In "The Housewife's Moment of Truth," Jane O'Reilly describes how numerous American women are discovering that they do housework neither appreciated nor considered important, but which prevents them from reaching personal fulfillment. She offers sensible suggestions for extricating oneself from the predicament, while acknowledging that male aversion to household chores is so deeply ingrained it is not likely to be overcome entirely in the near future.
- In "The Sexual Revolution Wasn't Our War," Anselma Dell'Olio explains why increased societal acceptance of nonconjugal sex has neither helped most women to enjoy sex more nor helped them resolve their emotional problems.
- In "Can Women Love Women?" Anne Koedt interviews a woman who argues that women can learn to love and sleep with women, but that this is only one among many personal solutions to the problem of living within a sexist society. She argues further that experimenting with lesbiansim out of ideological motives can be very dangerous.

One need not agree with all these points to conclude that *Ms.* presents some serious answers to the problems of women. Nevertheless, I am disappointed with it: the articles are drab, solemn, exhortatory.

Ms.'s tone is didactic and humorless because the magazine's purpose is neither to entertain nor to provide a forum for discussion or debate. *Ms.* is a magazine for sophisticated women activists, for middle-class housewives, and for working women who have not been much exposed to the women's liberation movement. Its purpose is to "raise the consciousness" of its readers, not to develop new solutions to the dilemma of the sexes.

Of course, if one is to "raise consciousness," one must begin with an orthodoxy, accepted truths to which women's consciousness is to be raised. But in the Women's Liberation movement, with its multitude of viewpoints and organizations, it is no mean feat to establish such instant orthodoxy. One imagines that the editors and writers of *Ms.*, after endless rap sessions, have consciously tried to steer a moderate course through the myriad tendencies of the movement. But in doing so *Ms.* has surrendered its élan, individual style, creativity. Significantly, the most complex, creative, and interesting sections of *Ms.* are interviews with women unconnected with the magazine, Dr. Matina Horner and Eleanor Holmes Norton. In these interviews, one finds new ideas searching for a mode of expression, hesitation, reflection, self-doubt—qualities in short supply in the other articles, trapped in the self-defeat of catechism.

DAVID BENSMAN □

I. F. Stone, "Betrayed by Psychiatry," NEW YORK REVIEW OF BOOKS, February 10, 1972, "Can Russia Change?" NEW YORK REVIEW OF BOOKS, February 24, 1972

A thorough two-part review of the current state of intellectual opposition movements in the Soviet Union, with special emphasis on the recent use of psychiatry to send dissidents to mental hospitals as a form of punishment. Stone is excellent in detailing the more "subtle" repressive methods of the Communist regime —more "subtle" than those of Stalin—and in his second article he ventures on an ambitious discussion of the nature of the regime and the possibilities for "democratizing" it. In his wish to "combine freedom and socialism" (we would say they are inseparable, and where

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The French Communists
PROFILE OF A PEOPLE
Annie Kriegel

Translated by
ELAINE P. HALPERIN
Foreword by
ARISTIDE R. ZOLBERG

The stability of the Communist party in twentieth-century France is an acknowledged political phenomenon. Professor Kriegel's background as a participating member of the party lends unique authority to this profile of the French Communists—those who vote the party ticket without being members, the card-carrying workers, and the party's small group of "functionaries." The endurance of the party is attributed to its remarkable ability to adapt to change, and to its nonpolitical involvement in the finances, health, education, and well-being of its membership. The French Communists are offered not just a political philosophy—they are offered an entire way of life. $12.50

The University of Chicago PRESS

there is no freedom there can be no socialism), Stone retraces ground familiar to the anti-Stalinist Left: he locates the "excesses" of the Stalin and post-Stalin regimes in the ideology and structure inherited from Leninism, insists that the "perversion" of what the Stalinists have called "a proletarian monopoly of the press" began before Stalin, etc.

All this is fine, and marks Stone as being apart from the younger Left authoritarians whom one encounters in academic life and some of whom have also appeared in the *New York Review of Books*. But right now, attacking the Russian regime takes no special courage for an American leftist intellectual; it is, for the moment, almost fashionable. Stone could perform a much greater service for the cause of "combining freedom and socialism" if he were to turn to the Chinese regime—for do not all the "perversions" and repressions that he excoriates in regard to the Soviet Union also exist in Communist China? This, to be sure, would bring him into a head-on collision with many of his younger admirers, but that is just where anyone should be who wishes to "combine freedom and socialism."

OF COURSE, Stone might say he doesn't know enough about Communist China to undertake an investigation of this sort. But that's just the point. Stone has gained the reputation of being a crack investigative reporter, and at least in regard to domestic American scandals he is. (Over the years, he wasn't quite that alert to the "perversions" of the Russian regime; most of the things he now says about it other writers have been saying, literally, for decades.) So now would be a golden opportunity, when part of the American intellectual community seems to be contracting the "Chinese flu," for Stone to do some investigative reporting about Communist China, and ask *precisely* the same sort of questions about it that he so rightly asks about Russia.

I. H. □

BENNET KREMEN's article, "No Pride in this Dust," which appeared in our last issue, is the first chapter of a book by Mr. Kremen, to be published by Dial Press in January 1973.

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Alex Nacht

Fanatics of Nihilism

THE MESSIANIC IDEA IN JUDAISM AND OTHER ESSAYS ON JEWISH SPIRITUALITY, by Gershom Scholem. New York: Schocken Books. 376 pp. $15.00.

At the core of every religion is the problem of making sense out of injustice, imperfection, disorder, and human limitation. The answers provided to these questions, and the meanings thereby attached to human actions, have had profound historical consequences. Almost always, the religious solution has been a sort of denial of this imperfect world—the world is seen as anteroom or stage, and men's conduct in it interpreted in the light of another, purer reality. It is this other, more harmonious reality that provides meaning and in its terms the thwarted potentialities of this world are seen. Every religion has its City of God or spiritual utopia.

As a result there is a constant unresolved tension in religion. Religious institutions try to channel spiritual aspirations by prescribing correct behavior in this world, but some individuals seek a direct personal redemption. When this need becomes widespread, the dynamics of faith come into sharper focus.

Judaism has traditionally been seen as a highly ethical and legalistic religion. Yet coexisting with this dominant strain there has also been a very strong mystical and apocalyptic undercurrent. Earlier Jewish historians tended to see this element as aberrant and atypical. Apart from apologist motives and a rationalist bias, there is also the fact that it has been extremely difficult to obtain detailed information on these "irrational" elements. Especially since the early 18th century, rabbinic authorities have battled these tendencies, seeing them—and not without reason—as a threat to the survival of the Jewish people itself. As a result, many documents have been destroyed, suppressed, or simply forgotten in various libraries or repositories.

If any one person has been responsible for a major reinterpretation of Jewish history in this regard, it has been Gershom Scholem, now professor emeritus of Jewish mysticism at the Hebrew University. Scholem didn't publish his first major work until he was in his forties,[1] because he had spent the first two decades of his scholarly career searching for and analyzing lost or neglected manuscripts.

The Messianic Idea in Judaism provides the best introduction to Scholem's work, with essays that span his career from an early one on Sabbatianism to a whimsical piece on the computer as Golem. There are papers on Jewish Messianism, on aspects of Jewish tradition, on Jewish symbols and sects, and an important critique of Martin Buber's approach to Hasidism.

The picture of Judaism that emerges from this work is that of a religious tradition which is constantly trying to make sense of a unique

[1] *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism* (New York: Schocken, 1941). His other important book in English is *On the Kabbalah and its Symbolism* (New York: Schocken, 1965); his two-volume work on Sabbatai Zevi will be published in translation next year by Princeton University Press. It should be noted that his writing is remarkably clear and accessible to nonspecialists.

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historical destiny. Scholem is concerned with abstract ideas—but what is important is these ideas as experienced dilemmas and ways of looking at the world. For Scholem, tradition is not simply a cultural patrimony handed down over the generations; it is, rather, a complex, living phenomenon, with its inner tensions working themselves out in history.

Judaism is seen not just as reacting to external forces, but also as possessing an internal dynamic or immanent development that takes place within the limits set by those forces. External factors provide the settings or opportunities within which inner transformations unfold. This view, not, of course, unique or original with Scholem, explains his interest in the nonrational, emotional, or uncodified aspects of Judaism: for it is this dimension that gives us an insight into the aspirations of a people at a historical moment. Perhaps more important, it is this dimension that serves as a counterforce to established authority and so can be seen as a source of the dialectical tension which makes a tradition a living one. Scholem has been criticized by more orthodox scholars as being overly interested in the more bizarre and destructive aspects of Judaism. The answer is that only by looking at the whole spectrum of historical responses can we really understand the main tradition.

THE MAIN THEME that ties these essays together is the historical yearning for redemption. This hope presupposes the feeling that things are askew—that the soul is in disarray and the world out of order. Redemption then is the restoration of harmony or the setting of things back into their proper places. In the redeemed world what once was obscure is clear, behavior that had to be prescribed flows freely in the right direction, frustrated potentialities are realized.

Within Christianity, redemption has been seen as occurring essentially in the spiritual realm, in the private soul. Judaism, on the contrary,

> has always maintained a concept of redemption as an event which takes place publicly, on the stage of history and within the community. It is an occurrence which takes place in the visible world and which cannot be conceived apart from such a visible appearance.

Given the historical situation of the Jews, it is not surprising that this visible appearance has always been seen in terms of the end of exile. In the Biblical prophecies this consisted of the restoration of the House of David. But after the destruction of the Second Temple and during the Middle Ages a new conception began to develop, and much of the subsequent tension within Judaism can be seen as a conflict between two visions of redemption—one restorative, the other utopian.

If these two views had simply been separate and opposite, the conflict would have been clear-cut. Both saw the coming of the Messiah as ushering in an age where the law or Halakah would be truly fulfilled, including many commandments that could not be fulfilled in exile. But one saw the restoration of an idealized past, while the other saw a more radical transformation. The uncomfortable point of this was that the utopian view saw a change in man's nature—the Messianic age would be an age of true freedom in which fulfillment would be spontaneous, coming freely and naturally from the individual. There was thus an implicit threat to the Torah and Halakah in this apocalyptic speculation. For if traditional law is to a large extent restrictive, it would appear to dissolve and lose its meaning in the Messianic age where, in fact, a new Torah might be required or where, in a negative twist, previously rejected interpretations of the Torah might now become more relevant. Messianic apocalypticism opened the window through which an anarchic breeze blew in. So long as utopia was the far future, it was merely intellectual speculation and while it might cause some unease, it was not an active threat. But when Messianic expectations became more widespread—especially after the expulsion from Spain in 1492—the threat became manifest.

Especially after the expulsion, there was another important development in Messianic thought—this time within the mystical tradition. Increasingly there developed a more purely universalistic interpretation of the *galut* or exile. Where previously redemption had concretely meant the return of Israel to its land, now it came to signify a universal reestablishment of things in their proper place. What was problematic was no longer just the displacement of a people, but rather the general disarray of the cosmos. And while Kabbalistic speculation had at first been mainly concerned

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with personal redemption, this feeling of personal disarray increasingly merged with a feeling of universal disorder and exile. But this should not be misunderstood—redemption was still seen as mystical and its universalization was spiritual and metaphoric. Internal regeneration was emphasized. This more general notion of redemption and exile, which developed in the 16th century, had a widespread influence among the masses of Jews, and at least one reason was that it met a need for an explanation of the recent catastrophe in Spain.

The consequences were significant. First, the apocalyptic element—which stressed the relationship between the coming of the Messiah and new moral conduct—was strengthened. What had previously been important—the historical and national aspects—came increasingly to be regarded as merely the visible external confirmations of this moral regeneration. Second, a new relationship was seen between the coming of the Messiah and history. Previously, the dawning of the Messianic age had no connection with what preceded it in history; rather, redemption was seen almost as a miracle, a gift of God. But now it was seen as a logical outgrowth of history—something toward which progress is made—signifying its completion and giving it meaning. Scholem himself has discussed the price demanded by Messianism in a passage which is worth quoting at length:

> The magnitude of the Messianic idea corresponds to the endless powerlessness in Jewish history during all the centuries of exile, when it was unprepared to come forward onto the plane of world history. There's something preliminary, something provisional about Jewish history: hence its inability to give of itself entirely. For the Messianic idea is not only consolation and hope. Every attempt to realize it tears open the abysses which lead each of its manifestations *ad absurdum*. There is something grand about living in hope, but at the same time there is something profoundly unreal about it. It diminishes the singular worth of the individual, and he can never fulfill himself, because the incompleteness of his endeavors eliminates precisely what constitutes its highest value. Thus in Judaism the Messianic idea has compelled a *life lived in deferment*, in which nothing can be done definitively, nothing can be irrevocably accomplished. One may say, perhaps, the Messianic idea is the real anti-existentialist idea. Precisely understood, there is nothing concrete which can be accomplished

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> by the unredeemed. This makes for the greatness of Messianism, but also for its constitutional weakness. Jewish so-called *Existenz* possesses a tension that never finds true release; it never burns itself out. . . .

The emphasis is on the yearning for something totally unprecedented rather than on the adaptation of past revelation to the present. Although traditionally it had been held that the coming of the Messiah could not be calculated, now there were increasing attempts to do just that. This building up of expectation augured an explosion. And it came.

IF ONE HAD TO PICK A YEAR to mark the beginning of modern Jewish history, 1665 would be better than most. That year Sabbatai Zevi was proclaimed the Messiah by Nathan of Gaza. Although the previous century had seen a host of local Messianic movements, this one spread like wildfire throughout the various Jewish communities. When, a year later, Sabbatai Zevi converted to Islam under the threat of martyrdom, the result was traumatic. There was a return to what had existed before—yet something had ended. As Robert Alter has pointed out, once the Jewish people believed redemption was at hand, it could never again be content with the confined world of the ghetto Jew.

The emotional commitment had been so deep that for large sections of the Jewish people it took the form of refusing "to submit to the sentence of history by admitting that their own personal experience had been false and untrustworthy." Given the choice between the external facts and their personal experience, they chose to follow the latter. In one way or another, the belief evolved that the apostasy of the Messiah had been a necessary development.

What happened was that potentially anarchic and antinomian tendencies that had long been dormant now burst into the open. Not only was the conversion of Sabbatai Zevi a necessary step in the coming of redemption, but that redemption had already begun despite the fact of the exile still continuing. The more moderate Sabbatians interpreted this to mean that, although they should not follow their master's apostasy, internally they were free. The more radical wing saw the true faith as one which must be denied outwardly and concealed. For some this meant converting and becoming Marranos; for others it meant the deliberate violation of the Torah and the path of "redemption through sin." But whichever way it went, the brunt of the nihilistic thrust was that "externals were no indication of true faith." Scholem claims that this destruction of old values paved the way for the Haskalah or Jewish enlightenment and for the 19th-century reform movements. Although the direct connection may be tenuous, another aspect of this argument is important—rabbinic Judaism was basically destroyed from within, not simply by secularist criticism.

Hasidism was another reaction to this Messianic disappointment, one which aimed at the neutralization of the Messianic element. The emphasis was on the individual's day-to-day life, without major reference to national or social redemption. Hasidism was not "redemption *from* exile, but redemption *in* exile . . . the destruction of exile by its spiritualization." Scholem criticizes Martin Buber for depicting Hasidism as a form of religious existentialism. It was not the fleeting moment or the immediate present that man entered into relation with, but "with what is *hidden* in the essentially irrelevant garment of the here and now." In other words, what was important in Hasidism was not to enjoy life as it is, but rather to extract from it a sense of transcendent unity.

Although Scholem is concerned with Jewish history, these essays have broader implications. Ideas are not automatically adapted to any given age—they involve a commitment which may sometimes take dangerous and bizarre turns. Nihilism, for example, is not simply an abandonment of belief, it is a particular solution to a crisis of faith. In our own time

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To Contributors

Like other periodicals, we have asked for stamped self-addressed envelopes with submitted articles but sometimes have returned them when such envelopes weren't included. The cost of doing so has become prohibitive, and we have to announce that from now on we will not return any manuscript unless it comes with a stamped self-addressed envelope.

THE EDITORS

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this tends to be couched more in political than religious terms, but the spectrum of choices is very similar. □

John H. Gagnon

Terror by Other Means

A QUESTION OF MADNESS, by Zhores Medvedev and Roy Medvedev. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 223 pp. $5.95.

"As a matter of fact, I have observed that your brother suffers from a split personality. He is a biologist, but is also involved with many other things which bear little relation to his immediate responsibilities. Besides, he is always dissatisfied about something, always fighting against something."

With these words the head psychiatrist at Kaluga Psychiatric Hospital justified to Roy Medvedev the confinement of his twin brother Zhores Medvedev. This captivity was, as Zhores Medvedev says, the culmination of a carefully worked out "scenario" to discredit dissent in the Soviet Union.

Ever since the underground circulation in the early 1960s of *Biology and the Cult of Personality* (published in the U.S. as *The Rise and Fall of T. D. Lysenko*), Zhores Medvedev has been a central figure in the civil rights movement of the Soviet "new class." Beginning with his first volume, an attack on Lysenkoism which was, perhaps, allowed to be circulated as part of the struggle in the Central Committee to discredit Khrushchev's agricultural policies, Zhores Medvedev has been actively involved in discussions about restrictions on foreign travel, contact with foreign scientists, and censorship of mail. These contests with Soviet bureaucrats are chronicled in the Medvedev papers—an attempt to make public the

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procedures by which decisions are made affecting the rights of Soviet citizens and to force a justification of the way administrative procedures are related to general legislative pronouncements.

This volume, written in alternating chapters by the two brothers, reports on the scheme to confine Zhores Medvedev as a madman. Beginning in February 1970 a series of attempts, of decreasing subtlety, sought to get Z. Medvedev to an interview with a psychiatrist. Under the guise of contacting Medvedev's older son (suffering from the malaise of the children of the new class, he is a "hippie"), Z. Medvedev was "accidentally" locked in a room at the local psychiatric clinic. He escaped. Knowing that these compulsory psychiatric contacts have been used to imprison dissidents, he carefully avoided other interviews. Finally, on May 29, 1970, the police and a psychiatrist forced their way into his flat and after a rather Chekhovian debate with Z. Medvedev, his wife and neighbors, he was seized and taken to the Kaluga Psychiatric Hospital.

At this point the "scenario" went awry, and in such a way as to suggest the internal ideological struggle that still continues in the Soviet Union. Had the "scenario" succeeded, Z. Medvedev would have gone the way of Grigorenko and many other nameless or less famous people. As a madman, condemned for his "obsessive reformist delusions," his challenges to the structure of Soviet legality would have been tainted. Attempts at undermining political dissent by describing oppositionists in mental health terms (character assassination of the New Left by some psychoanalysts) have occurred in the U.S.; but so far such practices do not characterize the repressive forces in the U.S. that have a conservative animus against all psychological explanations. They prefer, perhaps healthily, a rhetoric of good and evil.

THE PLOT WENT WRONG when Roy Medvedev succeeded in mobilizing a widespread protest among the Soviet elite. Intellectuals, writers, film-makers, academicians, old Bolsheviks protested by sending telegrams, visiting Z. Medvedev in the hospital, and contacting friends in ministries. In a particularly dramatic instance the academician A. D. Sakharov wrote on the blackboard at an international symposium on genetics that he was collecting signatures to protest the illegal committal of Z. Medvedev. The ferment in Soviet intellectual life became sufficiently visible so that the case took on an international character. This was particularly true after Solzhenitsyn's crucial letter, "This Is How We Live," defending Z. Medvedev and attacking repression through psychiatry.

Meanwhile the psychiatric apparatus for "settling accounts" moved forward. On Saturday, May 30, Z. Medvedev met with the local hospital's psychiatric committee, and on May 31 a second meeting included a forensic psychiatrist from the Serbsky Institute, an agency deeply implicated in the use of psychiatry against dissent. (Medvedev was not accused of a crime, therefore no forensic psychiatrist should have been involved.) Medvedev notes that the Serbsky psychiatrist had been well-briefed on his past and that extended investigations had apparently been conducted to develop evidence of his mental instability. After the protests mounted still another examining committee was organized, which met a day early to avoid the presence of a legally required independent psychiatrist selected by Roy Medvedev. The findings of this committee were inconclusive and it became clear that the bureaucratic apparatus was unable to press its case against Z. Medvedev. His release was ordered on June 17.

BOTH MEDVEDEVS offer compelling arguments for the existence of a deep conspiracy including the local party headquarters and the Procurator's office in Obninsk, the Kaluga region educational and medical agencies, and extending to the KGB and the Ministries of Education and Medicine at the national level. Who organized the scenario? It could have been the Lysenkoists occupying scientific posts of great power, the censorship sections of the Postal Services, the scientific and tourism agencies, or even competing factions of the Central Committee. If it was the latter, a hard-line faction could have been testing the ideological situation by experimentally imprisoning Z. Medvedev.

One thing that has characterized legality in the Soviet Union has been that it is almost impossible to discover how low-level and inter-

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mediate decisions affecting individuals are made. The Soviet Constitution and high-level legal pronouncements securing individual rights are quite visible, but not so the infrastructure that makes day-to-day decisions which conform, if they do conform, to the principles of Soviet legality. It is in this difficult struggle that the Medvedevs and many others in the emergent Soviet middle class are engaged. While the issuance of passports to dissenters in the U.S. has been a matter of controversy, at least the procedures by which a legal challenge could be made were known. But Soviet citizens face an entire landscape of inscrutable decision-makers whose normal procedures are institutionalized Stalinism.

Most striking about this book is its curiously calm and legalistic tone. Caught in the vortex of a conspiracy, neither brother raises his voice (though there are some barbed remarks about the sanity of the neo-Stalinist writer Shevtsov, and by indirection about Stalin and Lysenko) nor do they give in to the kind of nattering paranoia that afflicts many radicals in the U.S. From a Western point of view they seem almost too good, too sturdy, too noble. Z. Medvedev nowhere expresses a sense of horror at the ceremonies of degradation involved in his physically painful seizure by the police, his wife being hustled from the scene, or his transformation into the striped uniform of a mental patient. These are scenes that seem to demand the language of a Kafka, a Dostoevsky, or a Wright. Yet at no point do either of the Medvedevs use expressive language to detail their personal response.

This contained quality is perhaps brought about by the fact that the struggle still goes on to increase the predictability and surety of personal life for the Soviet citizen. When Z. Medvedev was released he was assured that no further issue would be made of his alleged madness, yet papers were forwarded to the local psychiatric agencies indicating that he was neurotic and needed treatment. Two of those who protested his incarceration were called before the Union of Writers and the Union of Cinematographers to be disciplined. The Medvedevs' response to this continued harassment has been to publish this dispassionate report of the "facts that are of such public importance." Its very coolness seems a conscious political decision to demonstrate mental competence. It may also be owing to a strategy adopted by certain dissidents in Russia: to take at face value the democratic protestations of the Soviet Constitution and thereby force the authorities into the embarrassment of explaining their deviations from it.

THE SMALL VICTORY is evidence of a change in the balance of power between the individual Soviet citizen and the state. While Stalin could rule by purge and arbitrary terror, his successors require the imposition of terror by other means. "Wreckers" who would have been executed in the three decades of Stalin's rule are now described as possessing an "obsessive delusion of being . . . champions of truth and justice" and are sequestered in madhouses. In the face of rising new elites the apparatus seems to be losing its nerve. Murder will not do, though "psychoadaptation" is still possible. And even this weapon is weakening as the Medvedevs and others loyal to the Soviet Union and the idea of Communism mobilize to create that procedural legality which implements abstract ideals. □

Gaye Tuchman

Pioneers of Liberation

ESSAYS ON SEX EQUALITY, by John Stuart Mill and Harriet Taylor Mill; edited and with an introduction by Alice S. Rossi. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 242 pp. $1.95.

At last John Stuart and Harriet Taylor Mill's writings on the condition of women in Victorian society have been made available to the general reading public. And high time it is too. For although one occasionally tastes a 19th-century flavor in these essays, drafted between 1831 or 1832 and 1861, they speak forthrightly and touch on 20th-century concerns. Indeed, one notes with some sadness the con-

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tinuing relevance of the Mills' arguments for the equal treatment of women with men. The very applicability of their ideas in this age of supposed sexual liberation serves as an unhappy reminder that concerning women at least, the more things change, the more they remain the same.

The volume is divided into four parts: a lengthy introductory essay by Alice S. Rossi; two short essays by John Stuart Mill and Harriet Taylor, reprinted from F. A. Hayek's *John Stuart Mill and Harriet Taylor: Their Correspondence and Subsequent Marriage;* "Enfranchisement of Women," reprinted from *Westminster Review;* and the famous "The Subjection of Women." This edition is, to my knowledge, the first attempt to present the Mill-Taylor materials as a comprehensive and self-contained unit.

Although her introductory essay concerns questions of intellectual history, Rossi makes it abundantly clear that her interest is heavily political. Given the political nature of these materials, even in our own time, this interest is more than appropriate. For two themes consistently emerge from these writings. First, that political, legal, and moral issues concerning the family cannot be "solved" without broaching and solving questions about the status of women. Second, that prejudices concerning the inferiority of women must be dismissed as just that—prejudices. John Stuart Mill argues that it is impossible to distinguish between socialized and innate gender characteristics (to use contemporary sociological terms), since the rearing and status of the sexes have always been dissimilar. Harriet Taylor Mill asks instead what right one group has to decide what another wants and should do. John Mill in particular amasses in "Subjection" a plethora of arguments with which to dismiss evidence concerning the inferiority of women and then demonstrates that even if women are inferior, they are still ill-treated by society. Too many of the arguments he refutes are still raised today, though they are currently masked in Freudian and ethological scientism.

Several of John Stuart Mill's arguments may appear objectionable. At one point in "Subjection," to refute notions of innate inferiority, he parades a panoply of female rulers who have been abler than most male rulers, an impulse almost avoided in "The Enfranchisement of Women," which is attributed to Harriet Taylor Mill by Rossi. Such arguments are today reminiscent of abolitionists parading "exceptional" ex-slaves before rallies to prove that blacks are not intellectually inferior. Yet many of the Mills' arguments remain fresh. Both dismiss condemnations of women by female writers by noting the extent to which these women are dependent on men. Both raise questions about forced subordination and draw analogies to caste and slavery.

DESPITE SUCH SIMILARITIES, the essays by Harriet Taylor Mill and by John Stuart Mill remain quite distinct from each other. Harriet Taylor Mill's early essay and the "Enfranchisement" attributed to her are by far the more radical. In one very modern passage, she argues that the full employment of women and men is preferable, even if the income of individual families would remain the same, and she writes of housework as an unpaid job. John Stuart Mill, on the other hand, seems wedded to the notion of wife as helpmate, does not even consider the notion of a working wife (though he argues that single women should be permitted to work to the fullest of their abilities), and feels women should be educated so that the minds of their husbands will not deteriorate for lack of intelligent discussion.

Rossi points out that John Stuart Mill's writings on women stand as seminal work. Ignoring Engels's later contribution (although it is indeed about the family, not explicitly about women), she identifies "Subjection" as one of three landmark volumes on women published within the past 100 years, the only one written by a man. In her introductory essay, Alice Rossi asks how John Stuart Mill came to write about women, a question that inevitably leads to the thorny issue of Harriet Taylor Mill's intellectual influence on his work. Although Rossi does not solve this historical puzzle (indeed, for dearth of adequate materials, no one really has), her analysis of the controversy concerning Harriet Taylor Mill's role in the work of her friend and husband is of particular merit. Following the well-known dictum that authors reveal as much of themselves as they do of the subjects whose ideas

(continued on page 447)

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Joseph Buttinger

How We Sank into Vietnam

One of the most puzzling questions future historians will have to deal with is why the United States ever got involved in the contemporary struggle for Indochina that has been going on since 1945. Did the considerations that determined the course of American foreign policy after World War II make this involvement inevitable or could it have been avoided in spite of the tensions that arose after 1945 between the West and the so-called Communist bloc? On this point, opinions will probably always remain divided, but those who believe that no other course could have been chosen without damage to the West or the United States would do well to consider the following:

(1) no Indochina war would have taken place if France had not insisted on reestablishing its control over Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos after these countries had gained independence following the Japanese surrender in 1945;

(2) it is questionable that the United States would ever have reached the point of even considering intervention in Vietnamese affairs if it had refused from the beginning to support the reestablishment of French rule in Indochina.

It is indeed one of the important conclusions of the Pentagon Papers "that the Truman Administration's decision to give military aid to France in her colonial war against the Communist-led Vietminh 'directly involved' the United States in Vietnam and 'set' the course of American policy." [1]

Yet this decision was made only in 1950, after the victory of Communism in China and the recognition of Ho Chi Minh's regime by the Soviet Union and Communist China. It would never have come about had it not been preceded by the decision made by the victorious Allies at the Potsdam Conference of July 17 to August 2, 1945, which gave the French not only a free hand but also Allied support for the reconquest of Indochina. This Potsdam decision, supported only by the British under both Churchill and Attlee, might not have been taken if President

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[1] *The Pentagon Papers: The Secret History of the Vietnam War,* the complete and unabridged series as published by the *New York Times* (New York: Bantam [paper], Chicago: Quadrangle [cloth], 1971), Introduction by Neil Sheehan, p. xi.

All references to the Pentagon Papers are to this edition. Few readers will be familiar with the actual multi-volume Pentagon Papers, which total 3,000 pp. of narrative history and more than 4,000 pp. of appended documents— an estimated total of about 2.5 million words. Specific documents—of which the Bantam edition contains 134—will be identified when quoted. All other quotations are from the introductions and surveys of the 10 chapters of the book, which also contains articles written by Neil Sheehan, Hedrick Smith, Fox Butterfield, and E. W. Kenworthy. In quoting from their texts, the Pentagon Papers are also referred to as the Pentagon study, account, record, or the Pentagon analyst, which may refer to any one of the unnamed authors of the 3,000-page historical account.

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Roosevelt had still been alive. It was opposed by Nationalist China under Chiang Kai-shek and certainly not favored by Stalin. Vigorous American opposition to it would probably have led to the acceptance of Roosevelt's concept of a United Nations Trusteeship for French Indochina as a first step toward full independence.

Surprisingly on this crucial point the conclusion of the Pentagon Papers is that Roosevelt "never made up his mind whether to support the French desire to reclaim their Indochinese colonies from the Japanese at the end of the war." [2] In view of the forceful statements Roosevelt made against the return of the French to Indochina to his Secretary of State Cordell Hull and to his son Elliot, as reported in their memoirs,[3] this conclusion must be regarded as erroneous.

There has been much speculation about the question whether American massive military intervention in Vietnam might not have been avoided if President Kennedy had been alive. It is unlikely that this question will ever be answered with any degree of certainty. But it is probable that Vietnam after 1945 would have experienced a period of peaceful evolution toward independence, under a regime not unlike that of Tito's Yugoslavia, if Roosevelt had lived and succeeded in imposing his anticolonial solution for Indochina. Nor is it far-fetched to assume that Roosevelt would not have disregarded the appeals of Ho Chi Minh, in at least eight letters to Washington in 1945–46 for United States and United Nations intervention against French colonialism.[4] "There is no record . . . that any of these appeals were answered." [5] Not until publication of the Pentagon Papers did the American public hear of the existence of these letters.

Yet the Truman administration's policy toward Vietnam remained ambivalent for at least the first three years of the Indochina war. On the one hand, the U.S. "fully recognized France's sovereign position," as Secretary of State George Marshall said in a still secret State Department cablegram sent to the U.S. Embassy in Paris; on the other hand, he added that the U.S. cannot shut its eyes to the fact that there are two sides to this problem. Marshall found that the French lacked understanding of the other side and had a dangerously outmoded colonial outlook on Indochina.[6] There was still little talk of a Communist conspiracy behind the Vietminh resistance; the famous domino theory was yet to be invented, and as late as the fall of 1948, the State Department's Office of Intelligence and Research "concluded that it could not find any hard evidence that Ho Chi Minh actually took his orders from Moscow." [7] Far from unconditionally supporting the French against the Vietminh, Washington urged the French, as it would in vain for the next six years, to give more independence to the Indochinese countries. France's granting of "independence within the French Union" under former Emperor Bao Dai in March 1949 did not deceive the U.S. government, which refused to recognize the Bao Dai regime. In what seems a last exercise of its sense of reality in regard to Vietnam, the State Department, in another cable to the Paris Embassy, declared: "We cannot at this time irretrievably commit the U.S. to support a native government which by failing to develop appeal among Vietnamese might become virtually a puppet government separated from the people and existing only by the presence of French military forces." [8]

Less than a year later, such insights, if they still existed in Washington, had to be suppressed in order to justify the new policy of supporting the French in Indochina. This dramatic change was brought about by the

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[2] *Pentagon Papers, op. cit.*, p. 7.
[3] See the *Memoirs of Cordell Hull* (New York: Macmillan, 1948), pp. 1595–99, and Elliot Roosevelt, *As He Saw It* (New York: Duell, Sloan & Pearce, 1946), p. 251.
[4] *Pentagon Papers, op. cit.*, Document no. 1, p. 26.
[5] *Ibid.*, (Fox Butterfield) p. 8.
[6] *Ibid.*, pp. 7–8.
[7] *Ibid.*, p. 8.
[8] *Ibid.*, p. 9.

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victory of Mao Tse-tung's armies over those of Chiang Kai-shek and the establishment of a Communist regime in China. After the Soviet Union and the new Peking government had recognized Ho Chi Minh's government in January 1950, Washington hastily granted recognition to the regime of Bao Dai. Praise for the French and their puppet government was combined henceforth with abuses heaped upon the Vietminh and with a propaganda campaign depicting in the blackest colors the consequences for the "Free World" of a French defeat in Indochina. According to Secretary of State Dean Acheson, recognition of Ho Chi Minh by Peking and Moscow "should remove any illusions as to the 'nationalist' nature of Ho Chi Minh's aims and reveal Ho in his true colors as the mortal enemy of native independence in Indochina." [9] The true friends of independence for Indochina now apparently were the French. Recognition of Bao Dai, the State Department concluded, should "promote a peaceful and democratic evolution toward self-government and independence of the [Indochinese] states." In June 1950, after consultations between French Foreign Minister Robert Schuman and Dean Acheson, when nothing at all had happened to "promote self-government" (and nothing would happen for the next four years), the State Department pleased the French by saying that Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos "now enjoy independence within the French Union."

After the U.S. had recognized the French-controlled Bao Dai regime on February 7, 1950, the first French request for aid was received in Washington and promptly endorsed by Dean Acheson in a memorandum to President Truman, a document significant for containing an early version of the domino theory, which was destined to become for the next 20 years the basic rationale of U.S. policy in Vietnam. "The choice confronting the U.S.," said Acheson, "is to support the legal governments of Indochina or to face extension of Communism over the remainder of the continental area of Southeast Asia and possibly westward." [10] The French-imposed puppet regimes of Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos had become the "legal governments" of these countries.

The problem of Indochina in relation to the interests of the United States was also taken up early in 1950 by the body which, apart from some military and civilian advisers to the President, was most consistent in advocating the policy of aid for the French that eventually led to direct U.S. intervention in Indochina: the National Security Council. The National Security Council was the first body to proclaim, in February 1950, the importance of Indochina for the security of the United States. It formulated its own version of the domino theory by predicting that the "neighboring countries of Thailand and Burma could be expected to fall under Communist domination if Indochina is controlled by a Communist government." [11] Two years later, the Council's formulation of the domino theory had become more sweeping. In a statement on U.S. goals in Southeast Asia, the National Security Council said that the French effort was "essential to the security of the free world, not only in the Far East but in the Middle East and Europe as well." [12]

On June 27, 1950 (after the outbreak of the Korean war), President Truman announced that the United States would accelerate military assistance to the French in Indochina (a first announcement of aid at the modest amount of $10 million had already been made on May 8, 1950). At the same time, Truman took another decision, undoubtedly without realizing that it was another step toward irretrievable American involvement in Vietnam. He sent a military mission to provide close working relations with the French forces in Indochina.[13] Aid for the French war effort climbed to $119

[9] *State Department Bulletin,* February 13, 1950.

[10] *Pentagon Papers, op. cit.,* p. 9.
[11] *Ibid.,* p. 6.
[12] *Ibid.,* Document no. 2, pp. 27–32.
[13] *State Department Bulletin,* July 3, 1950.

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million in 1951. "Ultimately, the American military aid program reached $1.1 billion in 1954, paying for 78 percent of the French war burden." [14]

1954: Shall the U.S. Intervene?

THE QUESTION of direct military intervention, however, arose only in the spring of 1954, when it became evident that no amount of financial assistance could avert the impending collapse of the French position in Indochina. Although such intervention did not come about in 1954, the Pentagon study contends that "the American people have never been told how seriously the Eisenhower inner circle debated intervening." And it goes on to say: "The record shows plainly that the U.S. seriously considered intervention and advocated it to the U.K. [United Kingdom] and other allies." [15] On this occasion the National Security Council again took the earliest and most extreme position by urging the President to warn the French that their "acquiescence" in a negotiated settlement would lead to the end of all U.S. aid for France; the U.S. should "consider continuing the war itself, with the Indochina States, if France negotiated an unsatisfactory settlement. America's goal should be nothing short of a 'military victory,' the Council said." [16]

This demand was also contained in a report by the Special Committee on the Threat of Communism dated April 5, 1954, which stated that "it be U.S. policy to accept nothing short of a military victory in Indochina." It also demanded that the U.S. "obtain French support for this position; and that failing this, the U.S. actively oppose any negotiated settlement in Indo-China at Geneva." The U.S. must "ensure that there be no ceasefire in Indo-China prior to victory whether that be by successful military action or a clear concession of defeat by the Communists." Immediate steps should be initiated toward a continuation of the war in Indochina "without French support should that be necessary." [17]

It took another ten years before insistance on "a military victory" and on a "clear concession of defeat by the Communists" advocated by the authors of this report became Washington's unequivocally pursued aim in Vietnam.

Even the risk of provoking the intervention of Communist China was impassively considered. If China should come to the aid of the Vietminh, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Admiral Radford (then together with Vice-President Nixon the strongest advocate of intervention), proposed the use of atomic weapons not only against China but also against "selected military targets in Indochina." [18]

In 1954, the nations of Indochina were spared American military intervention, thanks to opposition in the U.S. Congress, which would not agree to intervention without British participation (and Britain refused); thanks to President Eisenhower's reluctance to act without congressional authorization ("Eisenhower was old-fashioned enough to believe in the Constitution" [19]); and, more significantly, thanks to strong misgivings by some members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. A memorandum to Secretary of Defense Charles E. Wilson of May 20, 1954, reflected the views of those who, like Army Chief of Staff General Matthew B. Ridgway, thought that a war in Indochina would be tougher than the war in Korea had been.[20] "From the point of view of the United States," the Joint Chiefs said, "Indochina is devoid of decisive military objectives and allocation of more than token U.S. armed

[14] *Pentagon Papers,* (Fox Butterfield) *op. cit.,* p. 10. (The highest figure I had previously obtained was $815 million. See Joseph Buttinger, *Vietnam: A Dragon Embattled* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1968), vol. II, p. 808.
[15] *Pentagon Papers,* p. 10.
[16] *Ibid.,* p. 11.
[17] *Ibid.,* Document no. 4, pp. 35–38.
[18] *Ibid.,* Document no. 10, pp. 44–46.
[19] Hannah Arendt, in the *New York Review of Books,* November 18, 1971.
[20] As reported in *U.S. News & World Report,* June 25, 1954.

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forces to that area would be a serious diversion of limited U.S. capabilities." [21]

It was a well-kept secret until publication of the Pentagon Papers that the decision against intervention which Eisenhower is said to have made on April 4 had, as the Pentagon analyst puts it, only been "tentative." The debate for and against intervention remained a live issue. On May 7, the day after the fall of Dien Bien Phu, intervention was once more discussed between President Eisenhower and Secretary of State Dulles. According to a memorandum by the President's Executive Assistant Robert Cutler it was decided to propose to the French government that if certain conditions were met, "the U.S. will go to Congress for authority to intervene with combat forces." [22] Yet these were conditions that could hardly have been accepted by France. Furthermore, the memorandum also says that the U.S. "would never intervene alone." But in June, while at Geneva at last some progress was being made, "President Eisenhower had his aides draft a resolution requesting Congressional authority to commit American troops to Indochina." [23] By that time, however, the French government had become more interested in achieving an acceptable settlement in Geneva than in a continuation of the war with American military help.

The men of the National Security Council who had vainly tried to torpedo the Geneva Conference called the agreement it produced on July 21, 1954, a "disaster." But Washington, for military, diplomatic, and domestic political reasons, had no choice but to acquiesce in the disaster for the time being.

FOR THE UNITED STATES, concern for Indochina—far from being considered a closed affair after Geneva—now developed into a preoccupation that became more obsessive with every passing year. As early as August 3, 1954, the National Security Council formulated a program for economic and military aid to South Vietnam; its objective was "to maintain a friendly non-Communist South Vietnam" and, quite contrary to the Final Declaration of the Geneva Conference, "to prevent a Communist victory through all-Vietnamese elections." [24] When President Eisenhower approved this program, the decision was made to commit the United States to assume the burden of maintaining a separate anti-Communist state in the South. The Pentagon account concludes that in opposing the unification of Vietnam—through the elections stipulated in the Geneva agreement —and in maintaining a separate state in the South, the United States had "a direct role in the ultimate breakdown of the Geneva settlement," contrary to the "assertion of several administrations that North Vietnam alone was responsible for the undermining of the Geneva accords." [25]

American actions to undermine whatever agreement might result from the Geneva Conference in fact were initiated several weeks before the Geneva accords were concluded. Teams of American saboteurs charged with these actions were sent to Vietnam by the Eisenhower administration as early as June 1954. What these teams had planned and only partly succeeded in doing is described at length in an explicit document dealing with the Lansdale Mission, called after Col. Edward G. Lansdale, then of the CIA, who headed teams of saboteurs operating both in the North and the South from June 1954 to August 1955. This report reveals a total disregard for vital aspects of the Geneva accords and some embarrassingly naive assumptions of the economic and political effect the kind of sabotage undertaken by these teams could possibly have. Among the "paramilitary operations against the enemy," for instance, was the pouring of contaminants into the engines of the Hanoi bus company "so the buses would gradually be wrecked after the Vietminh took over the

[21] *Pentagon Papers, op. cit.*, p. 13.
[22] *Ibid.*, Document no. 8, pp. 40–42.
[23] *Ibid.*, p. 5.
[24] *Ibid.*, p. 1.
[25] *Ibid.*, p. 1.

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city." The Lansdale Mission increased its activity as the deadline for the evacuation of Hanoi by the French approached (October 9, 1954). An attempt made to destroy the modern presses of Hanoi's largest printing plant was frustrated by Vietminh security agents. As one rather peculiar way of fighting the enemy, this mission conducted English-language courses—not for secret agents charged with "political-psychological warfare," but "for the mistresses of important personages at their request." [26]

When the Lansdale Mission ended its dubious operation in August 1955, the Eisenhower administration's commitment was not only to a separate anti-Communist state in South Vietnam but also to the government of Ngo Dinh Diem, which had finally consolidated its power by defeating, in the spring and summer of 1955, the so-called politico-religious sects.

Diem and the Origin of the Insurrection

ONE OF THE MOST important admissions contained in the secret Pentagon study concerns the claim of the U.S. government that the war was imposed on South Vietnam by Hanoi. This claim, the Pentagon analyst says in what seems to be an intentional understatement, is "not wholly compelling." On the contrary, American intelligence estimates show "that the war began largely as a rebellion in the South against the increasingly oppressive and corrupt regime of Ngo Dinh Diem. . . . Most of those who took up arms were South Vietnamese and the causes for which they fought were by no means contrived in the North." [27] North Vietnam, says the analyst, was concentrating, from 1954 to 1958, on its internal development. Unification was expected either through the elections provided for in the Geneva settlement or through the collapse of the Diem regime. Up to 1959, the Diem regime was "nearly successful" in wiping out Vietminh agents. They were not supposed to fight back, and their insurgency against Diem was started, despite their orders, only sometime during 1956–57. "American intelligence officers in Saigon estimated that 30 armed terrorist incidents were initiated in the last quarter of 1957, with at least 75 local officials assassinated or kidnapped." While, according to the study, "there were some incidents of murder and kidnapping in the southern countryside from 1954 to 1956, they were not directly attributable to the Communist 'stay-behinds.' " [28] As to the terrorist acts of 1957, the account concludes "there is only sparse evidence that North Vietnam was directing, or was capable of directing, that violence." [29]

The Pentagon study also destroys some myths about the beginning of infiltration of Northerners into South Vietnam. Training centers for infiltrators were established near Hanoi only in early 1960. "During 1959 and 1960, United States intelligence officials estimated, 26 groups of infiltrators, totalling 4,500 people, made the trip south." But, the study adds, "from later interrogations of captured infiltrators, United States intelligence officers learned that until 1964, almost all the infiltrators were native southerners who went to the North in 1954." [30]

On the basis of the Pentagon study, it can be said that the views expressed by the critics of Washington's Vietnam policy were shared to a surprising extent by the American intelligence community, both in respect to the origin of the insurrection in the South and the nature and performance of the Diem regime. The U.S. intelligence services, including the CIA, were fairly unanimous and consistent in denouncing Diem as authoritarian, inflexible, bureaucratic, and suspicious. They likened his mentality to that of a "Spanish Inquisitor," and accused him of not tolerating any organized opposition, loyal or otherwise, and of brutally suppressing all open criticism. His land reform program, instead of redistributing land to the poor,

[26] *Ibid.*, Document no. 15, pp. 53–66.
[27] *Ibid.*, p. 67.
[28] *Ibid.*, p. 73.
[29] *Ibid.*, p. 75.
[30] *Ibid.*, p. 77.

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ended up taking back what the peasants had been given by the Vietminh. In the so-called Communist denunciation campaigns, which began in the summer of 1955, 50,000–100,000 people were put into detention camps. But, says the Pentagon study, many of these detainees were not Communists.[31]

While the Lansdale Mission, in one of its more ludicrous exploits, hired astrologers and paid them for making predictions of doom for the Vietminh and of great success for Diem, the National Intelligence Board expressed doubts about the viability of a South Vietnamese state as early as August 1954, when President Eisenhower was beginning to accept the idea of maintaining a separate anti-Communist state in the South. In short, Washington was never kept in the dark about the nature of the Diem regime and the disastrous consequences that were likely to follow from Diem's policies. But warnings were never heeded. It is indeed one of the more sensational revelations of the Pentagon Papers that all decisions made in Washington before 1954 and most of the later ones up to those concerned with the effectiveness of bombing the North were taken against the advice of the American intelligence community.

THE DIEM REGIME continued to decline after 1958, despite increasing American aid. At the same time the insurrection, firmly supported by Hanoi since 1960, gathered strength. When John F. Kennedy assumed the presidency, the question of what to do to prevent South Vietnam from falling into Communist hands was more urgent than ever. The Pentagon study adds something important to our knowledge of the process of American involvement in Vietnam by revealing that the military and some civilian members of the Kennedy administration, ever since the autumn of 1961, advocated the aggressive policy adopted only three years later under President Johnson. Not only was the demand to send U.S. combat troops to Vietnam raised as early as November 1961 (with shocking misjudgments as to the forces required); the bombing of North Vietnam too and even the possibility of invading the North were discussed by the military leaders and seriously proposed by the Joint Chiefs of Staff and Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara.

A constantly widening delineation of the domino theory was put forward as justification for direct and massive U.S. military intervention, without any serious consideration of what might be America's long-term interests in "saving" South Vietnam. Vice-President Johnson, for instance, after a visit to Vietnam and some other Asian Countries in May 1961, said that "the battle against Communism must be joined in Southeast Asia with strength and determination to achieve success there—or the United States, inevitably, must surrender the Pacific and take up defenses on our own shore." Indeed, at a time when no regular North Vietnamese troops fought in the South (not to mention Chinese); when the strength of the Vietcong was estimated at below 40,000; and when every Southeast Asian country, with the possible exception of Laos, proved capable of handling the threat of Communist insurrection without outside help, the Vice-President insisted that the United States "help these countries . . . or pull back our defenses to San Francisco." [32]

National intelligence reports predicted at that time that owing to Diem's one-man rule and toleration of corruption, a serious crisis threatened and that Diem lacked the ability to lead his country at this period. But Johnson, a true master of hyperbole, likened Diem to Churchill and said that we must either support Diem "or let Vietnam fall."

An even more sweeping form of the domino theory was put forward by the Joint Chiefs of Staff in a memorandum to the Secretary of Defense in January 1962. The

[31] *Ibid.*, p. 71.

[32] *Ibid.*, Document no. 21, pp. 127–30.

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loss of South Vietnam, the Chiefs said, could be followed not only by the loss of the Southeast Asian mainland but also by all of Indonesia and even by a threat to Australia and New Zealand. "India's ability to remain neutral would be jeopardized and, as the [Communist] bloc meets success, its concurrent stepped up activities to move into and control Africa can be expected. . . ." [33]

Confronted by such dangers—which not only the military mind but also several civilian international affairs experts were able to imagine—it is not surprising to learn how many responsible men in Washington discussed what the U.S. combat role in Vietnam should be several years before their various projects were executed. What surprises us now is the estimate of the forces they thought were required to stop the predicted worldwide dangers at their conjectured germination. In a paper of October 11, 1961, entitled "Concept for Intervention in Vietnam," the Joint Chiefs of Staff estimated that no more than 40,000 U.S. troops would be needed "to clear up the Vietcong threat." The same paper, drafted by Deputy Under-Secretary of State for Political Affairs Alexis Johnson, says that the possibility of North Vietnamese intervention in the South "must be frankly faced." The military and other experts thought that 128,000 troops would be needed to meet the threat of North Vietnamese and Chinese intervention.[34]

It is at this point that the man who must be considered one of the earliest and most persistent advocates of a "win the war" policy, General Maxwell Taylor, appears at the center of the scene. General Taylor was probably sent to Saigon in response to a request by the South Vietnamese government for U.S. combat forces, submitted on October 13, 1961. He cabled his findings to President Kennedy on November 1, 1961, recommending the introduction of U.S. military forces into South Vietnam. "I have reached the conclusion," Taylor wrote, "that this is an essential action if we are to reverse the present downward trend of events." General Taylor made his recommendations although he was aware of several disadvantages of the course of action he proposed. This was the most important of these disadvantages listed by Taylor: "If the first contingent is not enough to accomplish the necessary result, it will be difficult to resist pressure to reinforce"—probably still the best prediction made about American intervention in Vietnam.

The forces Taylor requested were not to exceed 8,000 men—a modest number even at that early time. But this request was to be carried out in a manner that introduced another important element into the picture of American actions in Vietnam: the element of conscious deception or, in plainer language, of lying to the American public. The 8,000 men, Taylor proposed, should be introduced to Vietnam as a "flood relief task force" into the Mekong delta (which suffered a flood at the time), but should be largely military in composition and include "combat troops." [35] In the same spirit, Taylor demanded more secret offensive operations in the North as well as in Laos and South Vietnam by U.S. Special Forces teams, whose numbers he wanted to be radically increased.[36]

About the same time, Secretary of Defense McNamara, in a memorandum to the President, joined the ranks of those who wanted to "commit the U.S. to the clear objective of preventing the fall of South Vietnam to Communism" and demanded "that we support this commitment by necessary military action." He therefore was "inclined" to recommend General Taylor's proposal (as were the Joint Chiefs of Staff). Yet McNamara was the first to be fully aware that this would be merely a "first step" and that "the struggle may be prolonged." He realized that the Joint Chiefs of Staff were utterly mistaken when they proposed on October 11, 1961, that 40,000 American soldiers could "clear

[33] *Ibid.*, Document no. 31, pp. 153–54.
[34] *Ibid.*, Document no. 29, pp. 139–40.
[35] *Ibid.*, Document no. 26, pp. 141–43.
[36] *Ibid.*, Document no. 28, pp. 146–48.

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up the Vietcong threat"; but McNamara was far from correctly assessing the U.S. forces required when he said that they "will not exceed 6 divisions or about 205,000 men." [37]

Only three days later, McNamara and Secretary of State Rusk submitted a report elaborating this position further by repeating that the U.S. should commit itself to the clear objective of preventing the fall of South Vietnam to the Communists, stating that "we should introduce United States combat forces if that should become necessary for success," and concluding that "it may be necessary for United States forces to strike at the source of aggression in North Viet-Nam." [38]

Although these pressures on President Kennedy increased as the military position of the Saigon regime deteriorated in 1962–63, Kennedy did not give in to these drastic demands. This does not answer the question what he would have decided in 1964 when it became more and more obvious that in the battle for control of South Vietnam the Communists were gaining the upper hand. Kennedy gradually gave priority to the military aspects of the war over the demand, earlier voiced by Eisenhower in 1954, for economic and political reforms. In May 1961, Kennedy ordered 400 Special Forces troops and 100 other Americans as military advisers to South Vietnam—a move that was kept secret, most likely because Washington knew this to be a breach of the Geneva accords, which limited the military personnel of the U.S. mission to 685 men. Kennedy, struck with the concept of counterguerrilla warfare, simultaneously ordered the start of clandestine actions—"sabotage and light harassment"—against North Vietnam by South Vietnamese agents under CIA direction. He countered the growing pressure of the military spokesmen by increasing the number of U.S. military advisers to the South Vietnamese forces. In December 1961, 400 men and 33 H–21 C helicopters were sent to Vietnam. (The first of these helicopters was shot down on February 5, 1962.) Between November 1961 and January 1962, the number of U.S. servicemen in Vietnam rose from 948 to 2,646, and by October 1963 it had reached 16,732. It was inevitable that these advisers to the Vietnamese forces were to be drawn into combat roles. When Lyndon Johnson assumed the presidency, U.S. involvement in Vietnam undoubtedly was a fact. As long as Kennedy had lived, Washington had resisted the demands raised by the military leaders and some of their civilian associates to send large contingents of U.S. combat forces to Vietnam.

No less important is another conclusion of the Pentagon study: it asserts that President Kennedy never accepted as an "unqualified commitment" the goal of saving South Vietnam from Communism.[39]

Kennedy and the Overthrow of Diem

TOWARD THE END of 1961, strong doubts about Diem's chances of surviving an insurrection were no longer confined to the intelligence community. These doubts now were shared, with varying degrees of intensity, by many high officials in Washington and by President Kennedy himself. As a result, Washington repeatedly tried to put pressure on Diem for reforms which were expected to strengthen his regime. One such request was made in a message to Ambassador Frederick E. Nolting, Jr., who was instructed on November 14, 1961, to demand a "concrete demonstration by Diem that he is now prepared to work in an orderly way [with] his subordinates and [to] broaden the political base of his regime." Kennedy went one step further by saying that the U.S. "would expect to share in the decision-making process in the political, economic and military fields as they affect the security situation." [40] But when this demand, as all earlier and later ones requesting reforms, had no other effect

[37] *Ibid.*, Document no. 29, pp. 148–50.
[38] *Ibid.*, Document no. 30, pp. 150–53.
[39] *Ibid.*, (Hedrick Smith) p. 107.
[40] *Ibid.*, p. 107.

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than to make Diem angry and even less cooperative, Washington retreated. On December 7, the embassy was instructed to soften the demand for reforms and drop the request for taking part in decision-making.

Inflated reports about the success of the so-called strategic-hamlet program seemed to have contributed to a mood of restrained optimism during 1962, despite a second attempt by army officers to get rid of Diem, and despite the intelligence community's continued emphasis of the demoralizing effect on the army by Diem's handling of it. Much of this optimism was no doubt expressed only to assuage public concern over the growing U.S. involvement in the war, as for instance President Kennedy's remark in his State of the Union address of January 14, 1963, that "the spearhead of aggression has been blunted in Vietnam." But up to the beginning of the Buddhist demonstrations during which government troops fired into a crowd at Hue on May 8, sparking a countrywide mass movement against the Diem regime, Washington clearly adhered to the dictum coined by an American journalist: sink or swim with Diem.

The change of attitude toward Diem, when it finally came about, was dramatic and irreversible. In a press interview on August 15, 1963, Diem promised the outgoing American Ambassador Nolting, and the public, that he was seeking conciliation with the Buddhists, apparently in response to the urging of Nolting, who was Diem's staunchest defender in Washington. But six days later, the government's Special Forces troops, on orders of Diem's brother Nhu, raided Buddhist pagodas throughout the country, arresting and brutalizing 1,400 people, mostly monks and nuns. The Pentagon narrative asserts that Washington was stunned by these raids. "In their brutality and their blunt repudiation of Diem's solemn word to Nolting, they were a direct, impudent slap in the face of the U.S." The analyst goes on to say: "For better or worse, the August 21 pagoda raids decided the issue for us."

The issue was whether or not to support the army officers who by then were plotting to overthrow Diem. Only a few days after the pagoda raids, CIA agents established contact with two of the main plotters.

The story of the plot and of the successful conclusion of the coup on November 1, 1963, is well-known. Yet what the Pentagon study adds is of considerable historical interest, since it removes all doubts about the role Kennedy played and the degree of responsibility Washington had in the overthrow of Diem. As Hedrick Smith puts it in his introduction to the chapter on this phase of the story: "The Pentagon's secret study of the Vietnam war discloses that President Kennedy knew and approved of plans for the military *coup d'état* that overthrew President Ngo Dinh Diem in 1963." [41] For weeks—

> and the White House informed every step of the way—the American mission in Saigon maintained secret contacts with the plotting generals through one of the Central Intelligence Agency's most experienced and versatile operatives, an Indochina veteran, Lieut. Col. Lucien Conein. . . . So trusted by the Vietnamese generals was Colonel Conein that he was in their midst at Vietnamese General Staff headquarters as they launched the coup.[42]

Conein, said Ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge who had replaced Nolting in August, "has been punctilious in carrying out my instructions." [43] Lodge's instructions were unambiguous. In contrast to many high American officials who had doubts, Lodge never wavered in his determination to get rid of Diem. As early as August 29, he stated that "there is no possibility, in my view, that the war can be won under a Diem administration." He even went so far as to ask for funds the plotting generals might need to "buy off

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[41] *Ibid.*, p. 158.
[42] *Ibid.*, p. 159.
[43] *Ibid.*, p. 159. The remark was made in a cable to McGeorge Bundy, the President's special assistant for national security affairs.

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potential opposition," and in message after message he endeavored to dispel the fear in Washington that the coup might not succeed.[44] Kennedy himself, although convinced that Diem must go, was deeply concerned about the consequences of the coup's possible failure and was ready, if necessary, to give a "reverse" signal. In a private message to Lodge he said, "we must go to win, but it will be better to change our minds than fail." However, what is more important is his "full support" for Lodge's maneuvers and his promise that Washington would do everything possible "to help you conclude this operation successfully." [45] Far from opposing the overthrow of Diem, what Kennedy stressed was a wish for "plausibility of denial" of U.S. involvement even in case of success, something Ambassador Lodge willingly accepted as long as he had a free hand in keeping the U.S. involved.

The Pentagon Papers reveal the subsequent denial of U.S. involvement in the coup as one of the many deceptions perpetrated on the American public by Washington in the pursuit of its Vietnam policy. The case is stated clearly: "For the military coup d'état against Ngo Dinh Diem, the U.S. must accept its full share of responsibility." Furthermore: "The conclusions of the Pentagon study run contrary to the denial by Ambassador Lodge in a press interview on June 29, 1964, and the impressions given by more carefully worded disavowals of American responsibility in the memoirs of some Kennedy Administration officials." [46]

There was, however, no American complicity in the murder of Diem and his brother Nhu that was committed by some of the plotting officers. On the contrary, soon after the coup started, Ambassador Lodge, in a telephone conversation with Diem, offered his services to ensure the President's and his brother's safety.

The document of the Pentagon study relating to the events of 1963 are of special interest for two more reasons: first, the persistence of the view that the war can and must be won, and the consequent misconception, based on wishful thinking, about the military situation; second, the appearance of the view, fleetingly and without impact on the course pursued, that the U.S. could not win this war and should therefore get out of Vietnam.

In order to obtain greater certainty about the true situation in the South and the prospects of the coup in preparation, Kennedy sent Secretary McNamara and General Taylor on another of the many American "fact-finding" missions to Saigon. The report they submitted on the military situation on October 2 spoke of "great success" during the last year and of no ill effect from the political crisis on the conduct of the war. The "bulk" of the American troops, then consisting of a mere 16,700 men, could be withdrawn by the end of 1965. (The withdrawal of 1,000, which they proposed, was actually announced for the end of 1963.)

Yet McNamara's and Taylor's optimism paled before that of General Paul D. Harkins, Chief of the American Military Assistance Command in Saigon. Harkins was strongly opposed to the course pursued by Lodge with the blessing of the White House, and he complained that he was "kept in the dark." He tried to support his rosy view of the military situation with reports sharply conflicting with those of the Ambassador and the CIA. On October 30 (one day before the coup), he said in a cablegram to General Taylor that "on balance we are gaining in the contest with the V.C.," and that "the general trend has been and continues upward." While the Vietnamese generals, convinced that the regimes' policies were demoralizing the army, plotted to overthrow Diem, Harkins claimed that the hatred for the government had not diminished the "vigor, enthusiasm and enter-

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[44] *Ibid,* see especially Document no. 57, pp. 226–29 and, for an earlier message, Document no. 39, pp. 197–98.
[45] *Ibid.,* p. 162.
[46] *Ibid.,* p. 162.

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prise" of the army. He concluded, as other American generals would conclude in every subsequent crisis, that "from a military point of view the trend is definitely in RVN [Republic of Vietnam] favor." [47]

There was apparently only one man in the Kennedy administration who was strongly opposed not only to the totally unrealistic view of a favorable trend in the military situation but also to the expectation of a great improvement through the removal of Diem. This man was the 39-year-old head of the Vietnam Interdepartmental Working Group, Paul M. Kattenburg. He was "the first official on record in a high-level Vietnam policy meeting to pursue to its logical conclusion the analysis that the war effort was irretrievable, either with or without Diem." With Diem, Kattenburg argued, the U.S. will be "thrown out of the country in six months." [48]

Kattenburg's analysis, which foretold that the war effort would go downhill, was immediately dismissed by Vice-President Johnson, Secretary Rusk, and Secretary McNamara, who all insisted that the war must and could be won.

In the pages dealing with this phase of U.S. policy in Vietnam, the Pentagon study contains another item of interest. On September 6, 1963, at a meeting of the National Security Council, Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy returned to the question Paul Kattenburg had first raised in a meeting of the Council on August 31. Robert Kennedy, according to the account, advanced the proposition that if the war could not be won by any regime, then it was time for the U.S. to get out of Vietnam.

That it might indeed be impossible to win the war even if the decadent and inefficient Diem regime was overthrown was soon confirmed by events: Vietcong activity jumped dramatically immediately after the fall of Diem.

[47] *Ibid.*, Document no. 55, pp. 221–24.
[48] *Ibid.*, p. 174.

1964: The Year of Preparation and Deceit

A FEW DAYS before the assassination of President Kennedy, his top aides held a strategy conference at Honolulu where one further step in the American military involvement in Vietnam was taken with the decision to step up "non-attributable hit-and-run" raids against North Vietnam, and also "operations up to 50 kilometers into Laos." In his first policy document on Vietnam, President Johnson, on November 26, 1963, approved of these decisions and, in maintaining the optimism held by the military and McNamara prior to the coup, reaffirmed the goal of concluding the war by the end of 1965.[49]

Less than four weeks later, this optimism had begun to evaporate, as a report of December 21 by Secretary McNamara after another trip to Vietnam shows. The new regime of the Vietnamese generals, McNamara stated, was

> indecisive and drifting. . . . Vietcong progress has been great during the period since the coup [and frankly revising his views of October, McNamara continued] . . . with my best guess being that the situation has in fact been deteriorating in the countryside since July to a far greater extent than we realized because of our undue dependence on distorted Vietnamese reporting.

McNamara summed up his views as follows: "Current trends, unless reversed in the next 2–3 months, will lead to neutralization at best and more likely to a Communist-controlled state." [50]

The Secretary of Defense ended his report on an ominous note, by saying we should be hoping for the best but also be "preparing more forceful moves if the situation does not show early signs of improvement."

Since the situation, far from improving, continued to deteriorate (a fact systematically hidden from the public), it did not take long before these "forceful moves" were taken. Covert military operations against

[49] *Ibid.*, p. 189 and Document no. 60, pp. 232–33.
[50] *Ibid.*, Document no. 61, pp. 271–74.

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North Vietnam, under the code name Plan 34A, were begun on February 1, 1964, on orders of President Johnson as recommended by Secretary McNamara. The hope (not shared by the intelligence community) was that "progressively escalating pressure" might force Hanoi to order a halt of the insurrection. Plan 34A included a wide variety of sabotage and psychological operations, such as flights by U-2 spy planes, kidnapping of North Vietnamese citizens for intelligence information, parachuting sabotage teams into the North, commando raids from the sea to blow up rail and highway bridges, and bombardments of coastal installations by PT boats. The aim was "substantial destruction, economic loss and harassment" by hitting "targets identified with North Vietnam's economic and industrial well-being." [51] Asian mercenaries were hired for these raids, but they were conducted under the control of General Harkins and actually directed for the President by Mr. McNamara through a section of the Joint Chiefs of Staff called the Office of the Special Assistant for Counterinsurgency and Special Activities.

The fact that these operations accomplished little and as a rule ended catastrophically for the sabotage teams does not diminish their character as acts of American aggression against North Vietnam.

This covert warfare against the North was of course concealed from the American public, as were the air operations in Laos, which began early in 1964 and "became a kind of preview of the bombing of the North." [52]

This was not all. In order to collect information for the 34A raids, destroyer patrols were conducted in the Gulf of Tonkin under the code name De Soto. The first of these patrols, which in August led to the Tonkin incident, were undertaken by the destroyer Craig in February and March 1964. Since none of these actions improved the situation in the South—where General Nguyen Khan had replaced the Junta that overthrew Diem—McNamara, after another visit to Saigon in March, urged "new and significant pressures on North Vietnam," which in the minds of the military had long begun to mean bombing raids. Indeed, as early as April 1964, the Joint Chiefs of Staff drew up a list of 94 potential targets for bombing the North.

But not only military leaders, the President's civilian advisers too were ready by spring 1964 to take the actions that Johnson, for obvious political reasons, kept postponing (though urging, already in March 1964, that "contingency planning" for pressure on North Vietnam "proceed energetically"). As to Johnson's aides, McNamara said in May 1964 he did not "rule out" bombing of North Vietnam; William Bundy sent the President, also in May, a 30-day scenario for graduated military pressure against the North culminating in full-scale bombing attacks; Ambassador Lodge, at another strategy conference at Honolulu on June 1 and 2, urged selective bombing against military targets in the North to bolster the shaky morale in the South, an idea warmly supported by Rusk and McNamara (and also by CIA head John W. McCone). Another influential adviser, Walt W. Rostow, provided a "theoretical framework for escalation" with his concept that "a revolution could be dried up by cutting off external sources of support and supply." [53] Rostow had already argued, in a memorandum of February 13, 1964, that Ho Chi Minh "has an industrial complex to protect: he is no longer a guerrilla fighter who has nothing to loose." In the meantime, the Joint Chiefs of Staff had refined their list of 94 targets; the list, which later was used, now also included bridges and industries.

All these people believed what General Taylor had said in November 1961, namely that "North Vietnam was exceedingly vulnerable to conventional bombing," [54] and they came to regard bombing the North as a substitute for success against the Vietcong

[51] *Ibid.*, (Neil Sheehan) p. 238.
[52] *Ibid.*, p. 239.
[53] *Ibid.*, p. 241.
[54] *Ibid.*, Document no. 26, pp. 141–43.

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in the South. As in years past, they brushed aside intelligence reports arguing, as did an analysis by the CIA of June 9, that the real roots of Vietcong strength lay in the South, and warning against the idea that bombing the North would induce Hanoi to call off the insurgency (a warning apparently not heeded by CIA chief McCone). A CIA report challenging the domino theory only prompted William Bundy to demonstrate the urgent need of a public-relations campaign "to get at the basic doubts of the value of South East Asia and the importance of our stake there," [55] an idea the President warmly endorsed.

The President, while still opposed to open warfare against the North, agreed to an intensification of the ongoing secret Plan 34A operations and approved of all necessary preparations for an immediate start of systematic bombing raids when he should consider this opportune. (When this time came in February 1965, the raids were started within 12 hours.)

Intensification of the covert war supported by the De Soto patrols of U.S. destroyers was bound sooner or later to produce the clash which occurred in the Gulf of Tonkin early in August and was used by Johnson as a pretext for ordering his first reprisal raids against the North. Under orders of the new head of the U.S. Military Assistance Command, General Westmoreland, South Vietnamese naval commandos staged, on July 30, 1964, amphibious raids against two North Vietnamese islands in the Gulf. On August 2, North Vietnamese PT boats, seeking the South Vietnamese raiders, encountered the destroyer *Maddox*, which was engaged in the De Soto intelligence-gathering mission 23 miles from the coast. Volumes have been written about the Gulf of Tonkin incident, but how serious the attack on the *Maddox* was remains still unclear. It is certain that the North Vietnamese PT boats did not hit the American destroyer. The Pentagon study concludes, significantly, that these boats apparently "had mistaken the *Maddox* for a South Vietnamese escort vessel." [56] Instead of ordering the withdrawal of the *Maddox* and halting further provocation by the South Vietnamese commandos, the President ordered another destroyer, the *C. Turner Joy*, into the Gulf, ("more as a deterrent than a provocation"), and he apparently also approved a second attack of South Vietnamese naval raiders on August 3 against the Rhon River estuary and radar installations at Vinhson.

The controversy over the question whether there was also an attack on the *Maddox* and the *C. Turner Joy* on August 4 may go on forever, but so far no clear evidence of such an attack has come to light.[57] Yet it is certain that Washington wanted to believe such an attack had occurred, in order to justify the reprisal raids on North Vietnamese oil depots and patrol boat bases, which the President was obviously eager to launch. Washington was buzzing with preparations for these raids when at 4 PM on August 4 McNamara received a telephone call from Commander in Chief of the Pacific forces Admiral Sharp, informing the Secretary of Defense that there was now confusion over whether another attack had actually taken place. McNamara asked Admiral Sharp to check and make sure that the attack had really occurred before launching the planes, but the order to attack was given by Washington 35 minutes before Admiral Sharp called back to say he was now "satisfied" that the attack had been genuine. Less than 12 hours after Washington had received word of the alleged second attack on the U.S. destroyers, the bombers from the carriers *Constellation* and *Ticonderoga* were on their mission against targets selected from a list that had been drawn up several months earlier.

At 6:45 PM, President Johnson called 16 congressional leaders to the White House to

[55] *Ibid.*, p. 259.

[56] *Ibid.*, p. 259.

[57] On this controversy and the events of August 4 in the Gulf of Tonkin, see Anthony Austin: *The President's War* (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1971), especially pp. 276–87.

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inform them of the raids he had ordered and to ask them for a congressional resolution endorsing whatever action he saw fit to undertake in Vietnam. This so-called Tonkin Resolution, for which William Bundy had prepared a draft as early as May 23, 1964, was adopted by Congress, and opposed by only two votes, on August 7.

Congress was not informed about the commando raids by the South Vietnamese on July 30 and August 3, and of U.S. responsibility for them. In later congressional hearings and press conferences, both McNamara and Secretary Rusk denied that they knew of these attacks or that there was any connection between them and the North Vietnamese attack on the destroyer *Maddox*. But the record shows that both these men were informed, in reports to McNamara of May 19, June 13, and July 28 about the entire scope of the 34A operations, for which advance schedules were drawn up by General Rollen. H. Anthis, a special assistant to the Joint Chiefs of Staff, for approval by the Departments of State and of Defense.[58]

The Joint Chiefs of Staff, in order to be prepared for wider operations should the President order them, adopted the Operation Plan 37–64 in a meeting on August 4. This Plan called for the deployment, in the South China Sea and in Thailand, of air strike forces for the opening of a systematic bombing campaign against the North. The bombing had in fact begun, and the number of advisers to the South Vietnamese army had just been increased to over 23,000. Assistant Secretary of Defense John T. McNaughton wrote a threatening message to North Vietnamese Prime Minister Pham Van Dong, delivered on August 10 by the Canadian diplomat J. Blair Seaburn. The message stated that Hanoi "can expect to continue to suffer the consequences" if it persisted in its present course. Yet the President claimed in his TV address to the nation on the evening of August 4, while the bombs were being dropped, that "we still seek no wider war."

[58] *Pentagon Papers*, op. cit., pp. 267–68.

On August 10, General Taylor, now Ambassador in Saigon, reported that the Khan government had only a 50–50 chance of survival, for which reason he considered it necessary to implement contingency plans against North Vietnam with optimum readiness by January 1, 1965. On August 11, William Bundy submitted a memorandum outlining graduated steps toward a full-scale air war against North Vietnam with "a contingency date, as suggested by Ambassador Taylor, of January 1, 1965." [59] The Joint Chiefs of Staff subscribed to Taylor's call for air raids against the North, calling them "essential to prevent a complete collapse of the U.S. position in Southeast Asia." [60] Indeed, although the systematic raids were started only in February 1965, the view that bombing the North was a military and political necessity and the decision to launch these attacks at the opportune moment can be said to have been firmly established six months earlier—at the height of the presidential election contest.

Typical for the thinking that prevailed between the reprisal raids of August 4, 1964, and the beginning of systematic bombing raids is a memorandum by Assistant Secretary of Defense McNaughton of September 3, outlining several means of provocation that could lead to a military response by Hanoi, which in turn could "provide good grounds for us to escalate if we wished. . . ." [61] From then on the discussion no longer turned around the question whether but only when air strikes against the North should begin.

On the basis of what must be regarded as major disclosures of the Pentagon Papers, it is clear that the President went along with this thinking and was therefore less than honest in his famous barbecue speech of August 29, when he said: "I have had advice to load our planes with bombs and drop them on certain areas that I think would en-

[59] *Ibid.*, Document no. 70, pp. 294–98.
[60] *Ibid.*, Document no. 78, pp. 354–55.
[61] *Ibid.*, Document no. 79, pp. 355–57.

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large the war, and result in committing a good many American boys to fighting a war that I think ought to be fought by the boys of Asia to help protect their land." Mr. Johnson assured his audience that "we have tried carefully to restrain ourselves and not to enlarge the war." [62] But on September 7, only nine days later, the Pentagon study reveals, the Johnson administration reached a "general consensus" at a White House strategy meeting that air attacks against North Vietnam would probably have to be launched. It was expected that "these operations would begin only in the new year." In contrast to the mood in spring, these views were now "advanced with a sense that such actions were inevitable." Plans for these actions began on November 3, the day Johnson was elected president in his own right.[63]

"A set of tactical considerations," the Pentagon analyst explains, "prevented action for the time being," adding that "the President was in the midst of an election campaign in which he was presenting himself as the candidate of reason and restraint as opposed to the quixotic Barry Goldwater" who was publicly advocating the bombing of North Vietnam.[64] But already in September, the President had ordered a resumption of the provocative De Soto patrol missions; in October he ordered intensified air strikes on the Laotian infiltration routes and a reactivation, under tightened American control, of the 34A operations against the North. All these operations, it was agreed, "should not be acknowledged publicly." [65] Not only the American public, but Congress too was kept in the dark about the steps taken by the Administration all during 1964 toward enlarging the war. To strengthen the President's resolve in considering the options the U.S. had in Vietnam, a working group under William Bundy insisted, on November 29, that bombing the North should be conducted "at a fairly rapid pace and without interruption" and be continued until U.S. demands were met. This memorandum also proposed that the U.S. define its negotiations position. But because the U.S. may be pressed to negotiate "before a Communist agreement to comply," its negotiations position should be defined "in a way which makes Communist acceptance unlikely." [66] The projected air raids were to last two or six months, during which Hanoi was expected to yield, and to come to the conference table "on terms favorable to the U.S."

Two voices were raised against the notion that bombing the North would produce the effect its advocates predicted. One was that of Undersecretary of State George W. Ball, who not only doubted the effect of the projected bombing, but also argued against the domino theory. He suggested a diplomatic strategy leading to an international conference on Vietnam. In public, however, Ball continued to defend the Administration policy. The other voice, often raised and always ignored, was that of the intelligence community, of which a special panel "tended toward a pessimistic view" of the effect of bombing the North on the Hanoi leaders, not conceding a very strong chance of breaking their will. The panel also argued against the Rostow theory which held that Ho Chi Minh could not afford to risk loosing the North's industries. Not even great damage, the panel stated, would have "a lasting effect on the daily lives of the overwhelming majority of the North Vietnamese population." [67] Yet the plans for bombing the North were now definite enough for the Administration to decide that allied governments should be briefed, which was done early in December.

Ultimately, the Pentagon study says, it was fear of a collapse of the Saigon regime and the "lack of any alternate proposals" for action that led to the air strikes. A Vietcong attack on the United States military advisers' compound at Pleiku in the Central Highlands

[62] *Ibid.*, (Neil Sheehan) p. 311.
[63] *Ibid.*, pp. 307 and 310.
[64] *Ibid.*, p. 310.
[65] *Ibid.*, p. 318.
[66] *Ibid.*, p. 309.
[67] *Ibid.*, p. 331.

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on February 6, 1965, "triggered a swift, though long-contemplated Presidential decision to give an 'appropriate and fitting' response." [68] Now 49 U.S. Navy jets delivered their bombs and rockets on North Vietnamese barracks at Donghoi, a training center 40 miles north of the 17th parrallel. On February 13, the President ordered the beginning of the sustained bombing action named Operation Rolling Thunder, with which he erroneously expected to bring the Hanoi leaders to their knees.

Escalation on the Ground and in the Air

ON MARCH 8, 1965, 3,500 MARINES LANDED at Danang, bringing the total of U.S. military personnel in Vietnam to 27,000. The mission of the Marines was restricted to a static defense of the Danang airfield. But three weeks later, on April 1, when it had become evident that bombing the North would not soon break the will of Hanoi, not prevent infiltration, and not improve the military and political situation in the South, the President decided that only the use of American ground troops in offensive action against the Vietcong could prevent the collapse of the Saigon regime. Fully aware that this might come as a shock to the American people, "he ordered that the decision be kept secret." [69] A National Security Council memorandum of April 6 says that the President had approved an increase in U.S. forces of 18,000–20,000 men and permitted a "more active use" of the Marine battalion already in Vietnam. But he desired that the step be given as little prominence as possible. "Premature publicity" was to be avoided and the actions taken "in ways that should minimize any appearance of sudden changes in policy"; these changes should rather "be understood as being gradual and wholly consistent with existing policy." [70]

The road on which Mr. Johnson had embarked with his decision to send combat troops to Vietnam proved longer and more slippery than the policy-makers in Washington could possibly have foreseen. Bringing in 18,000–20,000 men turned out to be only a highly inconclusive move in the policy of trying to win the war with a combination of bombing the North and assisting the South Vietnamese army with American troops against the Vietcong. It was a first small step, to be followed, over the next two years, by much larger ones in rapid succession. Less than three weeks later, on April 20, the heads of the military, at a conference at Honolulu, asked for an American commitment of 82,000 men. Mr. Johnson approved only a level of 40,000, but already in June he was moved, by arguments demonstrating a continuous deterioration of the military situation in the South, to raise this level to 70,000, and on July 28 he announced that the number of American soldiers in Vietnam would be increased to 125,000. Not all requests by General Westmoreland were fully or immediately granted, but at the end of 1965, there were 184,314 "American boys" fighting and many dying in a war that Johnson, on August 29, 1964, had said should be fought by "Asian boys." The troop level to which the President had by then agreed was 193,887.

The Pentagon study, in discussing the first step along this road, concludes that "the President was being less than candid" when he said at a press conference on March 31, 1965 (one day before his decision to commit combat troops), "I know of no far-reaching strategy that is being suggested or promulgated." [71]

The year 1965 became important for the course of U.S. policy in Vietnam also because of other actions and events. From March 2 on, the air assaults on the North were conducted on a sustained basis and no longer related to specific Vietcong "atrocities." General Taylor's complaint on March 7 that the air war was "unnecessarily timid" had an immediate effect in Washington. The bombing was intensified on March 14 and

[68] *Ibid.*, p. 343.
[69] *Ibid.*, p. 382.
[70] *Ibid.*, Document no. 98, pp. 442–43.
[71] *Ibid.*, p. 400.

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15 with the use of napalm, which the President had authorized on March 7. Air strikes now were also extended to nonmilitary targets, especially industries, but "publicity on the strikes was to be progressively reduced." [72]

In the ground war too, American actions became increasingly aggressive, partly in response to a Vietcong offensive in May–June 1965, with which the South Vietnamese army was unable to cope. June 27–30 saw the first major U.S. military action which, far from being defensive, "was a search-and-destroy operation into Vietcong base areas. . . ." [73]

June 1965 was also the month when the so-called credibility gap became wider and henceforth a permanent theme of the Vietnam debate. On June 8, Press Officer of the State Department Robert McCloskey caused a public outcry with "an honest and superficially inocuous statement . . . to the effect that 'American forces would be available for combat support together with Vietnamese forces when and if necessary.'" But the White House maintained, in reply to mounting criticism, that "there has been no change in the mission of United States ground combat units in Vietnam in recent days or weeks. . . . The primary mission of these troops is to secure and safeguard important military installations like the air base at Danang." Yet this denial was made meaningless by another sentence, which in good official doubletalk stated that "if help is requested . . . General Westmoreland also has authority within the assigned mission to employ those troops in support of Vietnamese forces faced with aggressive attack when other effective reserves are not available and when, in his judgment, the general military situation urgently requires it." [74] The defensive "enclave strategy" was overcome by events and by "a much more ambitious strategy sanctioned by the President." By July 1, 1965, the Pentagon study concludes, "the specter of U.S. involvement in a major Asian ground war was there for all to see." [75]

What this meant, in addition to rapidly mounting American casualties, had become evident on May 4, when the President had asked Congress for a supplementary appropriation of $700 million "to meet mounting military requirements in Vietnam," commenting, prophetically: "Nor can I guarantee this will be the last request."

A further widening of the credibility gap was achieved by the President himself in a press conference on July 28. Asked if the announced increase of U.S. fighting strength from 75,000 to 125,000 men implied a change in the existing policy of relying mainly on the South Vietnamese to carry out offensive operations and using American forces to guard installations and to act as emergency backup, Mr. Johnson's answer was: "It does not imply any change of policy whatever." These words were spoken while search-and-destroy operations authorized by the President had been going on for a whole month, a fact American newspapermen quickly made known to the public.

Only a few people in the Administration are known to have been frightened by the specter of U.S. involvement in a major Asian ground war. One of these was CIA chief John A. McCone, who made a prophecy that was soon to come true. "In effect," he said in a memorandum of April 2, 1965, "we will find ourselves mired down in combat in the jungle in a military effort that we cannot win and from which we will have extreme difficulty extracting ourselves." [76] His answer, however, was not to renounce the effort but to bomb the North "with minimum restraint"—evidence that not everyone in the intelligence community offered consistently good advice.

The only high Administration official who opposed as early as April 1965 both the policy of bombing the North and of sending combat troops to the South was Undersecretary of State George W. Ball, who saw "ab-

[72] *Ibid.*, p. 396.
[73] *Ibid.*, p. 411.
[74] *Ibid.*, p. 411.
[75] *Ibid.*, p. 412.
[76] *Ibid.*, Document no. 97, pp. 440–41.

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solutely no assurance" of success in this "costly and indeterminate struggle." Ball believed that neither more bombing nor the sending of more combat troops would ever bring decisive results. In a memorandum circulated on June 28, he said he was "convinced that the U.S. was pouring its resources down the drain in the wrong place" and therefore should "cut its losses" and withdraw from South Vietnam. He outlined his position in favor of disengagement again in a long memorandum to the President on July 1, proposing "a compromise solution," with arguments as telling as any advanced by other critics of the war at that time. Ball never spoke up publicly; he left the Administration in 1966, but remained to all appearances a loyal supporter of the policy he privately considered to be catastrophic.[77]

Mounting criticism of the course the President had chosen induced the Administration to conduct a public information campaign in which the President struck a position of apparent readiness to compromise. Important in this campaign was the speech Mr. Johnson delivered at Baltimore on April 7, barely a week after his crucial decision to send combat troops to Vietnam. But his offer of "negotiations without any preconditions," like many later similar moves, aimed primarily at quieting critics and obtaining public support for the air war, as the Pentagon study puts it.[78] These moves, the study continues, offered no compromise terms at all, but masked publicly unstated conditions for peace that were tantamount to a demand for the enemy's surrender,[79] or, as Undersecretary Ball put it in his memorandum of July 1: "So far we have not given the other side a reason to believe there is *any* flexibility in our negotiations approach. And the other side has been unwilling to accept what *in their terms* is complete capitulation." Ball also sensed what became apparent to other presidential advisers only two or three years later: that the war was "vastly unpopular and that our role in it is perceptively eroding the respect and confidence with which other nations regard us."

This view was confirmed in a diplomatic warning to Lyndon Johnson by British Prime Minister Harold Wilson on June 3, 1965, as Washington was considering extending the air raids to the petroleum storage facilities near Hanoi and Haiphong. The effect of this contemplated extension of the air raids, Mr. Wilson said, on public opinion in England, "—and I believe throughout Western Europe —is likely . . . to reinforce the existing disquiet and criticism that we have to deal with." [80]

Wilson's warning fell on deaf ears. Mr. Johnson was listening to the more comforting views of his own close advisers who, like McGeorge Bundy, had assured him already in February 1965, the day when the bombing of the North started, that international pressure for negotiations "should be quite manageable," warning the President at the same time "not to accept the idea of negotiations of any sort." [81]

But negotiations were no more the order of the day in June 1965 than they had been in February. The war had by then become "open-ended," and the U.S. commitment now was not just to deny victory to the enemy but to defeat him and "win the war." Yet the means of achieving this end were consistently underrated, even by such men as General Westmoreland, who had little inhibition in requesting forever increasing numbers of American troops for Vietnam.

It would be tedious to enumerate all of General Westmoreland's requests for more troops which were always endorsed by the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Between June and December 1965, these requests jumped from a ceiling of 175,000 to that of 443,000 to be reached by the end of 1966. Secretary McNamara, in a memorandum of November 30,

[77] For Mr. Ball's incisive arguments see *Pentagon Papers, op. cit.*, Document no. 103, pp. 449–54.
[78] *Ibid.*, p. 388.
[79] *Ibid.*, p. 388.
[80] *Ibid.*, Document no. 102, pp. 448–49.
[81] *Ibid.*, Document no. 92, pp. 423–27.

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1965, proposed a ceiling of 400,000 for the end of 1966, but warned that this "will not guarantee success." [82] He could hardly have been more right, since General Westmoreland raised the required ceiling already in June 1966 to the new high of 542,000 men. This figure was almost reached in March 1968 when the same man who had predicted the defeat of the enemy "by the end of 1967" wanted another 206,000 men for a ceiling of 731,000.

If this proved beyond any doubt that all optimistic predictions about the results of an escalation of the ground war between spring 1965 and 1968 were grievously mistaken, the same was true for the escalation of the air war, which also took place during the same period.

In March 1966, under pressure from the Joint Chiefs of Staff, McNamara recommended an extension of the air raids to the petroleum supplies of the North, a move that Admiral Sharp predicted would "bring the enemy to the conference table or cause the insurrection to wither." [83] These strikes were decided upon in May and started in June (against the advice of the CIA); they resulted in the destruction of 70 percent of North Vietnam's petroleum and oil storage capacity. But, as the CIA had forewarned, this failed to "cripple Communist military operations."—"Infiltration of men and supplies" to the South continued "undiminished," as the Pentagon account puts it. The account also makes clear the failure of the raids, both in respect to breaking the will of the Hanoi leaders and cutting the flow of men and supplies by stating that "as a venture in strategic persuasion the bombing had not worked." Based largely on a warning of November 1965 by the Defense Intelligence Agency, which said that "the primarily rural nature of the area permits continued functioning of the subsistence economy" in the North, the Pentagon analyst concludes: "The idea that destroying, or threatening to destroy, North Vietnam's industry would pressure Hanoi into calling it quits, seems, in retrospect, a colossal misjudgment." [84]

A study group of the Institute of Defense Analysis submitted the same view in a special report on the bombing on August 29, 1966. The bombing, this report said, "had no measurable direct effect" on Hanoi's capability to supply its troops and the Vietcong in the South. Moreover, "the bombing clearly strengthened popular support for the [Hanoi] regime by engendering patriotic and nationalistic enthusiasm to resist the attacks." [85]

To this must be added that bombing the North also had failed to improve the political situation in the South, where General Khan had been ousted in February 1965 as head of the Saigon government. In June 1965 he was succeeded by another military regime, which was headed by Air Vice-Marshal Nguyen Cao Ky and General Nguyen Van Thieu. This regime also made no progress; it lacked popular support and achieved no success in the struggle against the Vietcong.

Secretary McNamara looked for a way out of this impasse as early as July 1965 with a proposal to introduce, as part of a diplomatic initiative, a six- to eight-week pause in the bombing. He believed that an earlier five-day pause, May 8–13, had been too short. The Pentagon study, significantly, says that the President viewed this first pause "as a means of clearing the way for an increase in the tempo of the air war in the absence of a satisfactory response from Hanoi." [86] Several times during the fall of 1965 McNamara repeated his proposal, which was opposed by Secretary Rusk and the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The President waited until December 24 before ordering the new pause which, not surprisingly, merely resulted in resumption of the raids on a larger scale. It could hardly have been otherwise. "All the high officials who debated the pause in bombing assumed that it would be tempo-

[82] *Ibid.*, Document no. 108, pp. 487–89.
[83] *Ibid.*, p. 461.
[84] *Ibid.*, (Fox Butterfield) p. 469.
[85] *Ibid.*, Document no. 117, pp. 502–503.
[86] *Ibid.*, p. 470.

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rary," the study declares. "Throughout this discussion it was taken for granted that bombing would be resumed." [87] The pause ended after 37 days, on January 31, 1966. Hanoi had not "responded," since, as Assistant Secretary McNaughton put it, the conditions the U.S. proposed amounted to "capitulation by a Communist force that is far from beaten." [88]

McNamara's Doubts and Disenchantment

EVEN MORE PERPLEXING than the attitude of Undersecretary of State George Ball, who consistently advised the Administration to pull out of Vietnam but publicly defended the conduct of the war, was the attitude of Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara. McNamara was able to accommodate in his mind his early and recurrent doubts about the wisdom of U.S. policy in Vietnam, not only with publicly expressed optimism about its outcome but also with support of the measures that escalated both the air strikes in the North and the ground war in the South. Already at the end of 1965, while rejecting Secretary Ball's point of view, McNamara expressed the belief that the U.S. "was involved in a war which could not be brought to a satisfactory conclusion." [89] Typical for his attitude was the memorandum, mentioned earlier, of December 7, 1965, to the President in which he expressed serious doubts about the possible results of the ground war yet recommended another increase in the number of American combat troops.[90]

The man who strengthened McNamara's doubts apparently more than Undersecretary Ball was his Assistant Secretary of Defense John T. McNaughton who—in memoranda written during the bombing pause of December 24, 1965, to January 31, 1966, and dated January 18 and 19—stated bluntly that "we have in Vietnam the ingredients of an enormous miscalculation." The bombing, he said, will not achieve its intended purpose; the South Vietnamese government's "infrastructure is moribund and weaker than the V.C. infrastructure. . . . We are in an escalating military stalemate." McNaughton suggested that the U.S. settle for something short of a military victory, as for instance a coalition government including Communists, a free decision by the South to succumb to the Vietcong or the North, or a neutral (or even anti-U.S.) government in the South. Nevertheless, in the spirit that still animated his friend and superior McNamara, McNaughton recommended—for the last time—more troops, more bombing, and more support for the Ky government in Saigon.[91] But pessimism in regard to all these efforts and a readiness to accept a compromise solution of the war were for the first time expressed by someone who, unlike Ball, up to this time had been a "hawk." McNaughton's sentiments and views were definitely also those of McNamara, as was proved by a memorandum to the President of January 24, 1966.

During spring and summer 1966, the doubts of McNamara and his assistant grew perceptively. One reason for this was the political crisis in South Vietnam, where mass demonstrations against the Ky government could be suppressed only by the use of force, with open U.S. assistance. McNaughton called South Vietnam "an unholy mess. We control next to no territory . . . ." Militarily, he said, we will be at the same place a year from now.[92] The failure of the oil strikes to reduce infiltration was another great disappointment for McNaughton and McNamara, and approval of these strikes was the last major escalation recommended by the Secretary of Defense.

McNamara was no doubt also greatly influenced by the conclusions of the panel of 47 prominent scientists who held a secret seminar under the auspices of the Jason

[87] *Ibid.*, p. 471.
[88] *Ibid.*, p. 471.
[89] *Ibid.*, p. 464.
[90] *Ibid.*, p. 466.
[91] *Ibid.*, Document no. 101, pp. 491–93.
[92] *Ibid.*, p. 474.

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Division of the Institute of Defense Analysis at Wellesley, Massachusetts, in June, July, and August 1966. These scientists not only concluded that the air strikes had had no "measurable effect" but they also cast serious doubt on the entire U.S. effort by saying that there was "no adequate basis for predicting the level of U.S. military effort that would be required to achieve the stated objectives—indeed, there is no firm basis for determining if there is any feasible level of effort that would achieve these objectives." [93] The Pentagon study states that the conclusions of this panel had "a powerful and perhaps decisive influence in McNamara's mind" (but evidently none on the President's).

The report of the scientists was given to McNamara at the beginning of September 1966. On October 14, the Secretary of Defense submitted a memorandum to the President in which the doubts he had nourished for almost a year led him to challenge the basic trend of U.S. policy in Vietnam. He painted a dismal picture of the political and military situation in the South and of the prospects ahead, stating that pacification was a bad disappointment, that full security existed nowhere, and that Hanoi's determination appeared as firm as ever. McNamara rejected the prognosis that the war could be brought to a satisfactory conclusion within the next two years. More bombing, he said, was no solution of the problem the U.S. faced in Vietnam, because bombing to the extent of making "a radical impact," which could be done, "would not be stomached either by our own people or by world opinion . . . ." It was his opinion that the President should consider stopping the bombing of all of North Vietnam.

McNamara's other suggestions were all based on his view, which apparently he had held for some time, that the war could not be won. As regards the military effort, he proposed to limit the increase of U.S. forces to a total of 469,000 men by the end of 1967, which was 100,000 less than General Westmoreland had requested. But McNamara also had political suggestions for the President, such as to "take steps to increase the credibility of our peace gestures in the mind of the enemy . . . ." and even more radical, to seek a political settlement by developing "a realistic plan providing a role for the VC in negotiations, postwar life and government of the nation." [94]

The reaction of the Joint Chiefs of Staff to the McNamara memorandum was "predictably rapid and violent." It came on the same day in a memorandum to the President demanding that the war be brought to a successful conculsion through more bombing and more American troops. The Chiefs also claimed that the "military situation has improved substantially over the past year," and they assured the President that no one, "American or foreigner . . . can doubt the sincerity, the generosity, the altruism of U.S. actions and objectives." [95]

The President, evidently, preferred these opinions and proposals to those of his Secretary of Defense. For another 17 months, until the end of March 1968, he listened to those of his advisers, military and civilian, who continued to chase after the illusion of a successful military solution of the conflict, even if he himself nourished doubts and did not comply with every request of the men who believed that the war could be won. Johnson rejected McNamara's proposal of a cutback in the bombing, although public opposition had grown as a result of the reports from Hanoi by Harrison E. Salisbury of the

[93] *Ibid.*, Document no. 117, pp. 502–509. The idea for this study came from professors George B. Kistiakowsky and Carl Kaysen of Harvard and Jerome B. Wiesner and Jerrold R. Zacharias of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. The study calls the 47 men of the seminar "the cream of the scholarly community in technical fields" (p. 483). The scientists, who felt obliged to say something constructive, proposed the construction of an anti-infiltration barrier between North Vietnam and South Vietnam, which they said could be built at a cost of $800 million.

[94] *Ibid.*, Document no. 118, pp. 542–51.

[95] Ibid., Document no. 119, pp. 522–23.

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New York Times about the extent of damage to civilian areas. Mr. Johnson was obviously also unmoved by a study of the CIA in January 1967, which estimated the casualties of the air war against the North at 36,000, of which 80 percent were civilians. The number of individual flights had risen from 55,000 in 1965 to 148,000 in 1966. The number of aircraft lost was 171 in 1965 and 318 in 1966. The cost of this operation rose from $460 million in 1965 to $1.2 billion in 1966. Yet, said the CIA analysis, the bombing in 1966 "accomplished little more than in 1965." [96] Nevertheless, the President had authorized the bombing raids close to Hanoi on December 2–14, apparently, as the Pentagon account puts it, "to undercut what appeared a peace feeler from Hanoi." (In early December, the Polish member of the International Control Commission had tried to arrange talks between American and North Vietnamese representatives in Warsaw.)

In February 1967, the President decided to extend the air war against the North by authorizing strikes against the power plants of Hanoi and Haiphong. He also complied, perhaps reluctantly, with most of General Westmoreland's requests for additional troops, though not with a proposal, made in April 1967 by the Joint Chiefs of Staff, to extend the ground war into Cambodia and Laos, and possibly North Vietnam. Even such aggressive proponents of a "win the war" policy as William Bundy were against attacking the North, for fear of provoking China into entering the war.

Although McNamara, in a news conference on November 5, 1966, had given no indication of his disenchantment with the policies Mr. Johnson pursued (and never would even after he left the Administration in March 1968), he and his assistant McNaughton stuck to the views they had so firmly expressed in the memorandum of October 14, 1966. In a paper for the President on November 17, McNamara challenged General Westmoreland's entire strategy of trying to defeat the enemy with ever increasing American combat troops. "We have no evidence," he said, "that more troops than the 470,000 I am recommending would substantially change the situation." He also questioned, as all critics of the war had done before him, the estimates of enemy losses. "For example," he said, "the VC/NVA [Vietcong and North Vietnamese] apparently loose only about one-sixth as many weapons as people, suggesting the possibility that many of the killed are unarmed porters or bystanders." On the air war, McNamara said that "our bombing is yielding very small marginal returns, not worth the cost in pilot lives and aircraft," adding that "in spite of an interdiction campaign costing at least $250 million per month at current levels, no significant impact on the war in South Vietnam is evident." [97]

The President's reaction to this evaluation of the air war was his approval of an increase in B-52 sorties from 60 to 800 monthly, effective of February 1967. This escalation had been demanded by Admiral Sharp and the Joint Chiefs of Staff, but there is no doubt that the President was also influenced by the optimistic prognosis of such civilian advisers as Walt Rostow who, in a memorandum of December 12, 1966, had found the military situation so "greatly improved" that he expected a "potentially victorious position by the end of 1967."

The arguments of the President's military and civilian advisers in favor of seeking a military solution to the conflict no longer made any impression on Secretary McNamara and his associate McNaughton; both stubbornly clung to their views expressed in October 1966. On May 19, 1967, McNamara argued that all important military targets in the North were destroyed, and he therefore proposed a cutback of the bombing to the 20th parallel. More important, however, than his opposition to further esca-

[96] *Ibid.*, p. 523.

[97] *Ibid.*, Document no. 120, pp. 553–55.

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lation in the air and on the ground were his views on the need for a compromise solution of the war, which he had already outlined in October 1966. In essence, McNamara suggested again that the U.S. should stop guaranteeing a non-Communist South Vietnam and accept a coalition government that would include Communists.[98]

McNamara's memorandum of May 19, 1967, was bitterly condemned by the Joint Chiefs of Staff who urged, on May 31, that his proposals "not be forwarded to the President," because they represented such a divergence from past policies that they were not worthy of consideration. (The Chiefs did not know that the President had seen McNamara's memorandum 12 days earlier.) The policy McNamara proposed, said the Chiefs, would "no longer provide a complete rationale for our presence in South Vietnam or much of our effort over the past two years." [99]

But in the spring of 1967, there was now considerably more support, within and outside the Administration, for McNamara's proposals against more troops and less bombing than his views had enjoyed in October 1966. A Pentagon systems analysis of May 4, for instance, showed that the increases in American troop strength did not produce correspondingly high increases in enemy losses. This memorandum, which was written for McNamara by Assistant Secretary of Defense for Systems Analysis Alain C. Enthoven, predicted that "in theory," if 200,000 more Americans were put against the Communist forces, "we'd then wipe them out in 10 years." [100]

On the same day, May 4, 1967, the President received a letter from McGeorge Bundy, a former presidential assistant for national security who had left the Administration on February 28, 1966. McGeorge Bundy had been an early, ardent advocate of the air war on the North, but now he called the bombing "both unproductive and unwise," especially the raids on the power plants which the President had authorized in February.[101]

During spring and summer 1967 a rift developed between the President's civilian and his military advisers. While the latter continued to ask for more troops, made contingency plans for invading Laos and Cambodia, and wanted to extend the bombing raids to the North Vietnamese ports, a growing number of civilian advisers began to favor McNamara's proposals of limiting the number of ground troops and of cutting back the bombing of the North to the 20th parallel. A McNaughton memorandum of June 12, 1967, listed as favorably inclined toward a cutback of the bombing Deputy Secretary of Defense Cyrus C. Vance and Secretary of the Navy Paul H. Nitze.

The President, however, while disinclined to go along with all demands of the military for escalating the ground war, sided with them against McNamara and his supporters by still further extending the air war against the North. During July and August 1967, he approved all but a dozen of 57 new targets proposed by the Chiefs of Staff, targets of which many were not only close to Hanoi but also close to the Chinese border.

The fact that the air war was expensive in money and pilot losses,[102] while unable to achieve its goals, was not McNamara's only reason for wanting to curtail it. Long before the escalation of July and August, the issue of air strikes against the North had become for McNamara one with serious political and also moral implications. In his memorandum of May 19, 1967, he made a point showing that his position had become irreconcilable with that of the President and his belligerent advisers. "The picture of the world's greatest superpower" McNamara wrote, "killing or seriously injuring 1,000 noncombatants a week, while trying to pound a tiny backward

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[98] *Ibid.*, Document no. 129, pp. 577–585.
[99] *Ibid.*, (Hedrick Smith) pp. 538–39.
[100] *Ibid.*, p. 531 and Document no. 127, pp. 572–73.
[101] *Ibid.*, Document no. 126, pp. 569–72.
[102] The casualty rate of pilots in the raids near Hanoi and Haiphong was six times as great as over the rest of Vietnam. *Ibid.*, p. 537.

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nation into submission on an issue whose merits are hotly disputed, is not a pretty one."

On June 17, 1967, McNamara commissioned the Pentagon study, which was to bring to light, four years later, his disenchantment with President Johnson's Vietnam policy. On July 19, 1967, McNamara lost his closest ally in his struggle for a change of policy, Assistant Secretary of Defense McNaughton, who was killed in an air crash. What confrontations McNamara had with the President can only be guessed. Whether he himself or the President insisted that he leave the Administration will be known only when Mr. McNamara decides to express his views about Johnson's Vietnam policy as forcefully in public as he expressed them in his no longer secret memoranda to the President. He left the Administration in February 1968, almost three months after Mr. Johnson, apparently determined to get rid of him, had appointed him, on November 28, 1967, president of the World Bank.

Toward the Turning Point

THE DEPTH OF THE DISSENTION that had developed in regard to Vietnam in the Johnson administration by the spring of 1967 was most apparent in the contrasting views held by Secretary McNamara in his May 19 memorandum and the opinions and proposals of William Bundy contained in a memorandum of May 30. While McNamara argued that the U.S. should accept a coalition government including Communists, William Bundy not only opposed any role for the National Liberation Front in the political life of South Vietnam but even insisted that southerners who had gone North in 1954 and returned after 1959 "should be expelled as a matter of principle," unless they were "prepared to accept the Southern system of government. . . ." [103]

At this time the President still preferred to listen to advisers whose views excluded the idea, advanced by Secretary McNamara, of seeking a compromise solution to the war through negotiations with the enemy. Indeed, the President still rejected negotiations (which to be serious required a willingness to compromise) as firmly in spring 1967 as he had, on the advice of McGeorge Bundy, in February 1965. During the Vietnamese Tet holiday of February 1967, Mr. Johnson ordered another brief halt in the bombing (February 8–12), because a move to end the bombing and start peace talks with Hanoi was being discussed in London between Prime Minister Harold Wilson and Soviet Premier Alexei N. Kosygin, with the President's consent. A "total reversion" of Mr. Johnson's original position, according to Mr. Wilson, led to the collapse of these talks and the resumption, on February 13, of the bombing, soon to be conducted on an even larger scale.[104]

On the subject of peace negotiations, this is what Eugene McCarthy had to say in an analysis of the Pentagon Papers: "It is difficult to find in a most careful reading of the papers any indication that our offers to negotiate or our sending negotiators were ever meant to be anything more than devices by which criticism of the war might be blunted and justification for further escalation of the war established." [105] A similar view was held as early as October 1966 by McNamara, and this undoubtedly was the reason why he proposed to the President "to increase the credibility of our peace gestures in the mind of the enemy."

Despite all the warnings and pessimistic assessments by such men as Ball, McNamara, McGeorge Bundy, and also the CIA and a growing number of civilian officials in the Pentagon, the Administration entered the year 1968 in a spirit of optimism. In his year-end assessment, which was delivered to the

[103] *Pentagon Papers, op. cit.,* Document no. 130, pp. 586–88.

[104] *Ibid.,* pp. 525–26. For further information on the maneuvers to prevent serious peace talks, see David Kraslow and Stuart H. Loory, *The Secret Search for Peace* (New York: Random House, 1968).

[105] *New Republic,* July 10, 1971.

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President on January 27, General Westmoreland spoke in a tone of great satisfaction about the difficulties and setbacks suffered by Hanoi and the Vietcong during 1967. "The year ended with the enemy increasingly resorting to desperation tactics in attempting to achieve military-psychological victory; and he has experienced only failure in these attempts." [106]

Four days later, this enemy started his great Tet offensive, in which he was able, according to a report of February 12 by the same General Westmoreland, to attack 34 provincial and 64 district towns, as well as all autonomous cities. This the enemy achieved while committing only 20–35 percent of his North Vietnamese forces, employed as gap-fillers wherever Vietcong strength was not sufficient.[107] Even more telling about the enemy's achievements in the Tet offensive was a report of February 28 by Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Earl G. Wheeler, written after a visit to South Vietnam. Although Wheeler claimed that the enemy had suffered 40,000 killed, at least 3,000 captured, and perhaps 5,000 disabled, his conclusion was that the enemy's "recovery is likely to be rapid" and that "his determination appears to be unshaken." The Vietcong now had the initiative. They were "operating with relative freedom in the countryside" and had driven the Saigon forces back into a "defensive posture around towns and cities." General Wheeler also confirmed in this secret report much of what several American correspondents had written during and immediately after the Tet offensive. Pacification, he said, "has been set back badly. . . . An additional 470,000 refugees were generated during the offensive . . . . the people of South Vietnam were handed a psychological blow, particularly in urban areas where the feeling of security had been strong." [108]

In painting this gloomy picture, General Wheeler was less in touch with the reality of the situation than it might appear. His purpose in describing the enemy's strong position was to justify General Westmoreland's request for additional troops, a request Wheeler had encouraged in a cablegram to Westmoreland sent after February 8 (no exact date given) in which he said that the "United States government is not prepared to accept defeat in Vietnam. In summary, if you need more troops, ask for them." [109]

What the President's intentions were at that time is nowhere revealed. On February 3, four days after the beginning of the offensive, he was, according to General Wheeler, ready to send reinforcements if they were needed. But the number of reinforcements Westmoreland requested—206,000—was certainly higher than what Mr. Johnson was willing to consider. They were needed, said the generals, to defeat the enemy; whereupon, as General Wheeler put it optimistically, "the situation overall will be greatly improved over the pre-Tet condition."

Much has been written about the question whether General Westmoreland and Washington had any inkling of enemy preparations for a big offensive. The Pentagon analyst has no doubt that the Tet offensive came as a complete surprise and great shock to the Joint Chiefs of Staff and particularly to the President, who had discounted the negative analyses by the intelligence community and clung to the optimistic reports of General Westmoreland. All of this, in particular General Wheeler's description of enemy strength at the end of February, belied what the President had said to reporters at the White House on February 2—that the Tet offensive had been "anticipated, prepared for and met," and the enemy had suffered "a complete failure." [110]

The near-hysterical reaction by the Joint Chiefs of Staff and General Westmoreland

[106] *Pentagon Papers, op. cit.,* (E. W. Kenworthy) p. 593.
[107] *Ibid.,* p. 593.
[108] *Ibid.,* Document no. 132, pp. 615–21.
[109] *Ibid.,* p. 594.
[110] *Ibid.,* p. 592.

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to the offensive proves the opposite to be true. Apart from the request of another 206,000 troops and a demand for calling up reserves, the military asked for the immediate bombing of Hanoi within three nautical miles of the center and 1.5 miles of the center of Haiphong. General Westmoreland also pleaded for authorization to stage an amphibious assault by the marines into North Vietnam as a diversionary move. Bombing of Hanoi and Haiphong was supposed to reduce "the enemy capability for waging war in the South," an argument the Pentagon analyst dismisses as a *"non sequitur,"* in view of the "evident ineffectiveness of the bombing in preventing the offensive." [111]

As a result of the Tet offensive the rift that had been developing ever since 1966 between some of the Administration's civilian officials and the military leadership widened considerably. This led to a bitter debate, in which the President soon found himself in the middle between the advocates of deescalation and the proponents of the old policy of sending more troops to the South and bombing more targets in the North. Complying with Westmoreland's request for another 206,000 troops would have required not only vastly increased expenditures but also the calling up of 280,000 military reservists to replenish the depleted reserves in the United States—a measure the President was highly reluctant to contemplate. He compromised by authorizing, on March 13, the dispatch of another 30,000 troops and by calling up 98,000 reservists, pleasing thereby neither the proponents nor the enemies of further escalation. Both sides intensified the struggle to win the President over to their views, which became ever more irreconcilable.

It must have come as a surprise to many, including the President himself, when his newly appointed Secretary of Defense Clark M. Clifford, an old supporter of the President's policy, displayed a strong inclination to question the policy of "more of the same" advocated by the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Clifford, who was sworn in as McNamara's successor on March 1, told a study group comprising both advocates and opponents of deescalation that the real problem was "not whether we should send 200,000 additional troops" but whether the present course "could ever prove successful even if vastly more than 200,000 troops were sent." [112] McNamara's sucessor also found the "Saigon forces ineffective" and the bombing of the North "unproductive or worse."

At this point, the strongest advocates of deescalation had become the civilian hierarchy at the Pentagon, whose most forceful spokesmen were Secretary of the Pentagon's Office of International Security Affairs Paul C. Warnke and his young assistants Morton H. Halperin and Richard C. Steedman. Their views were supported by another study of the Pentagon Office for Systems Analysis which, according to the Pentagon account, painted "a bleak picture of American failure in Vietnam." Our strategy, said this analysis, has not worked. "Despite a massive influx of 500,000 U.S. troops, 1.2 million tons of bombs a year . . . our control of the countryside and the defense of the urban areas is now essentially at pre-August 1965 levels." [113]

A pessimistic appraisal of the military prospect also came from the CIA, which in a paper submitted to the Clifford study group said it was "out of the question" that the U.S. and South Vietnamese troops could clear South Vietnam of Communist forces,[114] a view echoed by the first draft memorandum of the Clifford group which stated that "even with 200,000 additional troops we will not be in a position to drive the enemy from SVN [South Vietnam] or to destroy his forces." [115]

Apart from the Joint Chiefs of Staff and General Westmoreland, the major opponents of a change in policy were General Taylor,

[111] *Ibid.*, pp. 593–94.

[112] *Ibid.*, p. 598.
[113] *Ibid.*, pp. 600–601.
[114] *Ibid.*, p. 599.
[115] *Ibid.*, p. 601.

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now President Johnson's military adviser, and Secretary of the Air Force Dr. Harold Brown. There was nothing new in their arguments in defense of the old policy, nor in their attitude of moral unconcern over the consequences of this policy for the people of Vietnam. In a memorandum to the Clifford group and the White House, Taylor argued that deescalation would mean "to accept needlessly a serious defeat for which we would pay dearly in terms of our worldwide position of leadership, of the political stability of Southeast Asia and of the credibility of our pledges to friends and allies." [116] But it was Dr. Harold Brown who spelled out more callously than anyone else how he thought the air war against the North could be made more effective. In a memorandum of March 4 to Deputy Secretary of Defense Nitze, in which he proposed stepped-up bombing raids on the North including the mining of the Haiphong port, Dr. Brown asked that these raids be conducted "without the present scrupulous concern for collateral civilian damage and casualties"; what he wanted was "to erode the will of the population by exposing a wider area of NVN [North Vietnam] to casualties and destruction." [117]

Typical of the sterility of these arguments was Dr. Brown's conclusion that North Vietnam would probably "be willing to undergo these hardships," and that the new raids he proposed would not "be likely to reduce NVN capability in SVN substantially below the 1967 levels."

Among the civilian opponents of a cutback in the bombing were Mr. Rostow and Undersecretary of State Nicholas Katzenbach. Secretary Rusk's position was ambivalent. He made the "suggestion" to restrict the bombing to below the 19th or 20th parallel, but to resume bombing in case of a new major enemy move. Rusk firmly opposed any American initiative for peace talks.

With these conflicting views, all strongly represented in the Clifford study group, it is no wonder that the final recommendations of these men were contradictory to the point of being meaningless, since no really new policy moves were proposed. On the issue of a cutback in the bombing, which Clifford was known to favor, the position taken (much to the surprise of the Pentagon analyst), was closer to escalation than to a halt. The group's draft memorandum of March 4 also proposed no new peace initiations, and although it had reservations in regard to General Westmoreland's troop requests, it recommended a reserve call-up of 262,000, and increased drafts and extension of the terms of service. The proposal of cutting back the bombing to the 20th parallel, which the President adopted by the end of March, was not even mentioned. All in all, the Pentagon study says, the group envisioned "a little bit more of the same," at a time when "the country was becoming increasingly divided over and disenchanted with the current Vietnam strategy and would no longer settle for "more of the same." [118]

The available evidence indicates that the evolution of the President's thinking during February and March reflected the conflicting positions of his advisers and responded to the divided opinions and sentiments of the country. No doubt, the disinclination to escalate the war was the reason for Mr. Johnson's refusal to endorse the request for an additional 206,000 troops; he also did not yield to the pressures for a widening of the air war against the North. But in a meeting with his advisers on March 16 Johnson said: "Let's get one thing clear. I'm telling you now I am not going to stop the bombings"; on March 17, the *New York Times* reported that the President would approve sending 35,000–50,000 new troops to South Vietnam, (a report the Pentagon study calls "amazingly accurate"). And on March 18, Johnson said in a speech before the National Farmers Union in Minneapolis that "Hanoi was seeking to win something in Washington that they can't win in Hue, in the I Corps or in Khesan," assuring his audience that we

[116] *Ibid.*, p. 600.
[117] *Ibid.*, p. 606.
[118] *Ibid.*, p. 604.

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would not "tuck our tail and violate our commitments."

Yet in private the President no doubt was paying attention to what the critics of his policy had to say, and he was also weighing the mood of the country. The President was well aware of the country's growing disenchantment with the war, and the many signs of popular discontent must have helped in shaping his thinking toward the decision he reached at the end of March. On February 29, the Clifford group, not quite consistent with its finding of March 4, warned in an initial draft memorandum of growing disaffection in the country in case of further escalation. "This growing disaffection," the draft stated, "accompanied, as it certainly will be, by increased defiance of the draft and growing unrest in the cities because of the belief that we are neglecting domestic problems, runs great risks of provoking a domestic crisis of unprecedented proportions." [119] On March 13, the President was narrowly beaten by Eugene McCarthy in the New Hampshire democratic primaries; on March 16, Robert Kennedy entered the presidential race on an antiwar platform similar to that of McCarthy; and on March 18, 139 members of the House of Representatives (98 Republicans and 41 Democrats) sponsored a resolution for a congressional review of the Administration's policy in Southeast Asia.

Sometime in March Mr. Johnson decided to seek the advice of a group of former and present high officials known as the Senior Informal Advisory Group but informally referred to in Washington as the "Wise Men." They were Dean Acheson, secretary of state under President Truman; George W. Ball, undersecretary of state in the Kennedy and Johnson administrations (but now in private) business); General Omar N. Bradley, World War II commander; McGeorge Bundy, now president of the Ford Foundation; Arthur H. Dean, negotiator of the Korean armistice; Douglas Dillon, undersecretary of state under Eisenhower and secretary of the treasury under Kennedy; Associate Justice Abe Fortas of the Supreme Court; Henry Cabot Lodge, twice ambassador to South Vietnam; John J. McCloy, high commissioner in West Germany under Truman; Robert D. Murphy, a prominent career diplomat then in private business; General Matthew B. Ridgway, retired commander of the Korean war; and Cyrus R. Vance, former deputy secretary of defense. One member, Arthur J. Goldberg, the United States representative at the United Nations, was added to this group on March 20. Mr. Goldberg had infuriated the President with a memorandum on March 15, in which he recommended a halt in the bombing. On March 20, however, the President invited Mr. Goldberg to the White House, asking him not only to go through his arguments once more but also to join in a meeting of the "Wise Men" planned for March 25. The "Wise Men," most of whom had up to 1968 been considered more or less determined "hawks," had all approved of the President's escalation of the air war in 1967 (with the possible exception of McGeorge Bundy and General Ridgway). Now they advised deescalation.

Whether the President was glad to have this advice or "deeply shaken" by it, as one account claims,[120] it undoubtedly strengthened his disinclination to widen the war. The Pentagon study concludes that Mr. Johnson's decision against further escalation had already become evident on March 22, when he appointed General Westmoreland army chief of staff quite obviously in order to remove him from his post in Vietnam.

The Pentagon study does not say when the President decided to reduce the bombing. But it reveals, in a memorandum of March 31 by Secretary Rusk to the U.S. ambassadors of countries involved in Vietnam, how very tentative the decision to stop bombing above the 20th parallel in reality was. In telling the ambassadors of Australia, New

[119] *Ibid.*, p. 601.

[120] *Ibid.*, p. 610. This is the account by Stuart H. Loory of the *Los Angeles Times*, which the Pentagon account reprinted verbatim, saying that it "has been generally considered to be a reliable account," p. 610.

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Zealand, Thailand, Laos, the Philippines, and South Korea that the President was going to announce this decision, Secretary Rusk wrote "You should make it clear that Hanoi is most likely to denounce the project and thus free our hand after a short period." Rusk also said that bad weather would anyhow limit bombing above the 20th parallel for the next four weeks or so, "which we tentatively envisage as a testing period in any event. Hence we are not giving up anything really serious in this time frame. Moreover, air power now used north of the 20th parallel can probably be used in Laos (where no policy change is planned) and in SVN." [121] As the Pentagon analyst comments, no one expected a positive reaction from Hanoi.

In his famous speech of March 31, in which Mr. Johnson announced the bombing restriction and added "I shall not seek, and I will not accept the nomination of my party," the President also remarked that he would send 13,500 support troops for the emergency contingent authorized in February. Very few people noticed that this was a reversal of the decision made two weeks earlier to send 30,000 new troops.

When Hanoi, on April 3, agreed to peace talks with Washington, a new phase began in the evolution of American policy in Vietnam.

Conclusions

WHILE AT LEAST A TENTATIVE HISTORY of the American involvement in Indochina from 1945 to 1966 can now be written (thanks partly to the publication of the Pentagon Papers), this is not the case for the period from the spring of 1968 to the present. The reason is not only that much necessary documentation—such as memoirs of participants and still classified government papers—is not yet available; more important is that a correct evaluation of decisions and events of this period is impossible as long as their true significance cannot yet be judged from the results they eventually will produce. After four years, the phase launched by President Johnson's decision to deescalate the bombing of North Vietnam has neither led to the end of the war nor even produced any indication as to when and with what kind of settlement this long conflict will be brought to a conclusion. What could be written about this period at this time, if idle speculation is avoided, is no more than a description of all important decisions and events, with relevant comments by those responsible for them. But such a treatment of America's role in Indochina since 1968 would not fit into the framework of an article that tries to say something about the meaning and consequences of historical events, and about the motives of the men who make history. What follows, therefore, is a mere listing of the more important events and decisions, and a brief discussion of the reason that I believe explains why the hopes for an end of the war, nourished since spring 1968 by promises, negotiations, and some acts of military deescalation, have still not been fulfilled.

After more than a month of haggling the site for the peace talks was agreed upon and the first meeting of American and North Vietnamese representatives took place in Paris on May 13, 1968. On October 31, President Johnson ordered an end to all air attacks on the North. This was followed in December by an agreement between Washington and Hanoi to widen the Paris talks through the participation of the Saigon government and the National Liberation Front, political arm of the Vietcong. The first session of the enlarged talks took place on January 18, 1969. At the beginning of 1972, the widened Paris talks can be said to have made no progress at all in three years and 139 sessions. But there was a noticable softening in the Communist position since January 1969, culminating in the Seven-Point proposal by the Vietcong delegation on July 1, 1971.[122]

[121] *Pentagon Papers, op. cit.,* Document no. 134, pp. 622–23.

[122] For a review of the Paris talks that is critical of the U.S. position, see George Mc T. Kahin in the *New Republic,* November 6, 1971.

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It is easy to foresee that the Paris peace talks will remain stalled as long as Washington refuses to abandon its position, which in the eyes of the Vietcong amounts to nothing less than a demand to surrender the aims for which they have now fought for almost 15 years: the right to participate in the political life and eventually also in the government of South Vietnam. The U.S. by entering into negotiations not only with Hanoi but also with the Vietcong, has in principal, on occasion verbally, recognized the claims of the National Liberation Front to have a share in the government among all other political forces in the South. But the actual policy pursued by the United States ever since negotiations were agreed upon has been to continue the war, in the hope of reducing the enemy's strength and will to a point where it would no longer be necessary for the United States and the Saigon regime to make the political concessions required for a peaceful settlement.

Despite President Johnson's bombing halt and the Nixon administration's troop withdrawals, reducing enemy strength in order to obtain peace on Saigon's unnegotiable terms remained Washington's aim—an only slightly modified version of the old policy of "winning the war." Only 12 days after ordering his cutback of the bombing raids to below the 20th parallel, Mr. Johnson, on April 11, 1968, authorized a new higher ceiling of ground troops. This ceiling of 549,000 was never quite reached, but the number of U.S. troops in South Vietnam was still 542,000 in June 1969, 13 months after the start of the Paris peace talks. It is true that massive ground operations (recognized, as was the bombing of the North, as unproductive), were gradually given up, but U.S. weekly casualty figures still stood between 200–300 well into 1970, proving that ground action against the Vietcong and the North Vietnamese in the South remained intensive. Between January 1969, when Mr. Nixon assumed the presidency, pledging to end the war, and December 1971, over 18,000 Americans lost their lives in Vietnam. Altogether, American losses at the end of 1971 stood at 45,627 killed in battle, 10,823 dead from nonhostile causes, and 302,396 wounded. The South Vietnamese reported 137,660 of their troops killed and nearly 300,000 wounded. The alleged number of killed Vietcong and North Vietnamese was 788,700 toward the end of 1971.

Opposition against the war, which had no doubt strongly influenced Mr. Johnson's momentous decisions of March 1968, kept growing all during 1968 and '69, and was certainly one of the reasons why President Nixon started, rather timidly, his program of troop withdrawals from Vietnam in June 1969. A first announcement on June 8 said that 25,000 U.S. soldiers were to be withdrawn by the end of August; a second announcement, made on September 16, said that another 35,000 would leave Vietnam by the end of December 1969. In the meantime, the peace movement in the United States reached a peak on October 15, 1969, with mass meetings against the war all over the country, and a demonstration in Washington of more than 200,000 people a few weeks later. On December 15, Mr. Nixon announced another reduction of 50,000 in U.S. troop strength as of August 1970, and on April 20, 1970, he revealed his plan to withdraw 150,000 men by spring 1971, leaving only 248,000, or almost 300,000 less than the total number of American troops in Vietnam at the time he took office.

IF THIS ANNOUNCEMENT of April 20, 1970, aroused new hopes for an early end of the war, these hopes were crushed ten days later when South Vietnamese and American troops invaded Cambodia. Official propaganda presented this widening of the conflict as necessary in order to shorten the war; but for the opposition, the invasion of Cambodia and a simultaneous increase of ground and air operations in Laos were only new evidence that U.S. strategy, despite Mr. Nixon's troop withdrawals, still aimed at "winning the war." American ground troops were withdrawn from Cambodia as of June

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30, but massive U.S. air support for the South Vietnamese and Cambodian troops continued, devastating much of the country and creating, as had been the case in South Vietnam, countless refugees. A year after the start of the invasion, two-thirds of Cambodia was under Communist control, and the prospect of an end to the war was as remote as ever.

Aware that his troop withdrawals and subsequent reduction of American casualties were taken as evidence that he was really working toward an early end of the war, Mr. Nixon continued along the road he had chosen in June 1969 and withdrew a total of 172,000 men during 1971, leaving no more than 158,000 by the end of the year. On January 13, 1972, he made another withdrawal announcement, reducing the level to 69,000 as of May 1, 1972. But gaining support for his policy and reducing opposition to the war through a drastic reduction of U.S. casualties was not Mr. Nixon's only motive for withdrawing more and more troops from Vietnam. By the end of 1971, over 8,000 aircraft had been lost, and the overall cost of the war had risen to over $130 billion. Perhaps Mr. Nixon—unhappily looking toward a $35–40 billion deficit in his 1971–72 budget—realized that "there are limits to the resources even this country can waste without going bankrupt." [123]

But if Mr. Nixon was determined to save money, save American lives, and reduce opposition to the war, this did not mean that he was working toward "winding down" the war in order to bring it to an early conclusion through political compromise. Simultaneously with his policy of withdrawing Americans, Nixon pursued what became known as the Vietnamization of the war—the policy of increasing, with American funds, the strength and equipment of the South Vietnamese army to such an extent that the war could be successfully pursued after all American forces were withdrawn. The killing of the enemy, and the being killed in the process, should be limited to the Vietnamese, or, as some critics put it, Vietnamization meant merely a change in the color of the bodies.

In view of the record of the South Vietnamese army during all previous years of fighting, the expectation that this army was ever going to defeat the Vietcong and the North Vietnamese forces would no doubt have been recognized as another illusion had the withdrawal of U.S. forces not been compensated by a new and steadily increasing use of American air power all over Indochina. The enemy, and with him the hapless populations of South Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos, was attacked from the air on an unprecedented scale. Now bombing the North, under the slogan "protective reaction," was resumed with ever increasing intensity, culminating at the end of 1971 in a series of raids as massive as any conducted before the bombing halt. No less than 6,000 sorties—one flight by one aircraft—were flown, with heavier bomb loads than ever before, during December 1971, and altogether 108 strikes were conducted against the North in 1971.

A report by the Cornell University Center for International Studies showed that—*despite a reduction in sorties—the heavy increase of bomb tonnage per flight, the increase in the bombing of Laos, and the extention of the raids into Cambodia meant that the total of the tonnage dropped over Indochina since Mr. Nixon took office was nearly 3 million tons—about as much as had been dropped before the bombing of the North was halted in 1968. Between 1965 and 1971, three times as many bombs were dropped on Indochina than the Allies dropped in World War II.*

The extent to which Vietnamization failed to meet Washington's expectations—despite this unprecedented use of American air power—was revealed in the American-supported invasion of Laos by the Vietnamese army in February and March 1971. This new widening of the war ended catastrophically for the Vietnamese ("withdrawal became a scramble for survival" [124]), and briefly

[123] Hannah Arendt, in the *New York Review of Books*, November 18, 1971.

[124] *Time*, January 3, 1972.

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revived the antiwar movement in the United States, where once more 200,000 protesters marched in Washington and 700 veterans of the Vietnam war threw their hard-earned decorations on the steps of the Capitol.

The fiasco of the Laos invasion—and the fact that the Communists, as a result of the extension of the war into Cambodia and Laos, controlled at the end of 1971 more territory in these countries than their U.S.-sponsored governments—did not prevent Mr. Nixon from proclaiming, "without the slightest qualification," that "Vietnamization has succeeded." [125] Now American optimism—partly resulting from the enemy's tactics of not provoking through aggressive action a reversal of Mr. Nixon's policy of withdrawing American troops—ran as high at the beginning of 1972 as it had just before the Tet offensive in 1968.

But nothing at all, either in the statements or the actions of the President, indicated that he had learned the lesson that seven years of costly American failure taught to anyone with a minimum knowledge of Vietnam's recent history. This lesson, however, was not only ignored by Mr. Nixon, but also apparently by all the other men who have decided American policy in Vietnam. "No one at the top knew or considered it important that the Vietnamese had been fighting foreign invaders for almost 2,000 years." [126] The ignorance of the pertinent historical background was amazing. This historical background, if they had not chosen to ignore it, could have taught them that the Communists had been victorious in Vietnam, *without any outside help,* in 1945, and had again succeeded in obtaining, through the Geneva Agreements, a promise of gaining control of the entire country through the elections to be held in 1956. No other evidence is needed to show that the case of Vietnam does not fit into Washington's concept of a plot by an imaginary Communist "bloc" to conquer Southeast Asia. The case of Vietnam was and still is unique, for reasons rooted in the history of Vietnam and not to be found in any other Southeast Asian country.

Explicit and wide-ranging as the Pentagon Papers are, they supply no satisfactory answer to the question of why the United States ever became obsessed with the notion that the triumph of Vietnamese Communism in 1954, a twice accomplished historical fact, had to be undone after the French had failed to undo it in a war that lasted almost eight years. But these documents make clear that once the U.S. had engaged its power and prestige, a change of policy was prevented by "the haunting fear of the impact of defeat not on the welfare of the nation but on the reputation of the United States and its President." [127] And so it continued in early 1972 as it had in 1965 and 1968, when both Mr. Johnson and Mr. Nixon refused to be the first American president to lose a war, not realizing that in terms of accepted contemporary international conduct, this war should never have been started.

As early as March 1965, Assistant Secretary of Defense McNaughton, perhaps the most clear-headed of all American policy advisers on Vietnam, defined the U.S. aims in Vietnam as follows: 70 percent to avoid humiliating defeat; 20 percent to keep South Vietnam out of Chinese hands; and 10 percent to permit the people of South Vietnam to enjoy a better, freer way of life.[128] It is more than doubtful whether the Chinese were ever interested in any kind of control of South Vietnam. But it is certain that the "freer way of life" has been denied to the people of South Vietnam ever since their governments, after the end of colonialism, were sponsored by the "Free World." This "freer way of life" was indeed never more than a cheap pretext for U.S. military intervention in Vietnam, for which no one has as

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[125] *Life,* December 31, 1971.

[126] Ralph Stavins, Richard J. Barnet, and Marcus G. Raskin, *Washington Plans an Aggressive War* (New York: Random House Vintage, 1971), p. 246.

[127] Hannah Arendt, *op. cit.*

[128] *Pentagon Papers, op. cit.,* Document no. 96, pp. 432–40.

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yet succeeded to supply a satisfactory explanation in terms of real American interests—political, economic, or strategic.

It was again McNaughton, devoted to his country and loyal to his chiefs McNamara and President Johnson, who, while military intervention was being considered in 1964, nevertheless realized that South Vietnam may "disintegrate completely beneath us," and that in this case we should hold together the country "long enough to permit us to try to evacuate our forces and to convince the world to accept the uniqueness (and congenital impossibility) of the South Vietnamese case." [129] McNaughton was the only official who, in contrast to the adherents of the propagandistically contrived domino theory, had an awareness that the case of Vietnam was indeed unique.

The chief reason why the United States still continues to support the current Saigon government (which would collapse immediately without American support), and refuses to accept a coalition government that would include Communists (as McNamara had already suggested in 1966), is the fear that such a government might soon turn out to be a mere vehicle for establishing Communist control of South Vietnam. Yet coalition governments with Communists after World War II did not lead to Communist rule in Finland, Austria, Italy, or France. If this should happen in South Vietnam (which is quite likely), it would again be only further proof that the case of Vietnam is unique.[130]

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[129] *Ibid.*, Document no. 85, pp. 365–68.

[130] It seems that even the CIA realized what I call the uniqueness of Vietnam and, as McNaughton put it, the congenital impossibility of the South Vietnamese case. According to the *New York Times* "Week in Review" of Sunday, June 27, 1971 (quoting the Chicago *Sun Times*), the CIA advised Nixon the U.S. could immediately withdraw from South Vietnam and "all of Southeast Asia would remain just as it is for at least another generation." If the CIA were the authority it tried to be during the entire Vietnamese adventure, this statement could be called the official demise of the "domino theory." On this point, see also Ralph Stavins, *et. al., op. cit.*, p. 81.

ON JANUARY 25, 1972, President Nixon revealed that secret negotiations between Washington and Hanoi have been conducted in Paris during the past two years and that his national security adviser Dr. Henry A. Kissinger, on October 11, 1971, had submitted to the enemy an eight-point program for a settlement of the Vietnamese conflict to which Hanoi and the Vietcong had failed to "respond."

The main point of this program concerns elections, to be held six months after a peace agreement is signed and a cease-fire established. But nothing is said about the crucial question that has to be settled before any peace agreement and cease-fire can be concluded: what will be the composition of the government under which the elections are to be held? It is simply assumed that the present regime will continue to remain in power. The cease-fire would end all purely military operations, but Mr. Nixon's program makes no provisions for ending the political terror with which the present regime attempts to eliminate all its opponents. "Pacification" will presumably continue, including the liquidation of suspected Communists and "neutralists" by the terror groups of the CIA-led Operation Phoenix, while the cease-fire would prevent the Vietcong from fighting back. Nor are any provisions made for the release of the thousands of opponents in concentration camps and prisons, or for an end of the Thieu government's interference with freedom of the press, speech, and assembly. There are only two "concessions" in Mr. Nixon's program: a commission to supervise the elections composed of representatives of all political groupings, and the resignation of President Thieu four weeks before the elections.

With the American public, Mr. Nixon apparently improved his image as a man ready to compromise in order to end the war; but any closer examination of his election proposal reveals it to be a crude political maneuver that will not advance the cause of peace in Vietnam. Not even Mr. Nixon

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himself could possibly have expected the other side to accept elections as long as Thieu's administrative, military, and police apparatus—in which the henchmen of the present regime exercise total power—remains entrenched. This power is not in the least theatened by a commission to supervise the elections, as President Thieu, determined to make no concessions to the enemy, knew very well when he proposed such a commission two years before Mr. Nixon did. With the help of his men in the army, police, and administration, Mr. Thieu already has "won" two elections, the last one with no less than 91.5 percent of all votes cast; nothing in Mr. Nixon's eight-point program will prevent him or anyone of his clique from running and "winning" again.[131]

Elections in South Vietnam will not be meaningful unless the governmental apparatus that runs the country is dismantled on the province, district, and village level. This requires not only a longer period of time than one month and not only the resignation of Thieu, but the replacement of his entire government by one composed of representatives of all political forces in the South: of the present regime, of the NLF, and of other groups not represented in the existing government—in other words, the coalition government Hanoi and the Vietcong have proposed ever since the start of negotiations, and which Washington so far has rejected.

President Thieu, opposed to any kind of concession to the Communists, could not possibly be part of such a government. Only a few days after Mr. Nixon made his eight-point program public, Mr. Thieu repeated his four Nos—no territorial concessions, no legal Communist activity, no coalition, and no neutralism—a position that excludes compromise even on Mr. Nixon's unrealistic terms. Thieu apparently does not believe his own claim that the NLF has no longer any significant popular support. More likely, he is afraid that, given the smallest legal foothold, the Communists would soon become the leading political force in the South, too. This is, no doubt, what the Communists themselves believe and why they do not insist, as Washington and Saigon falsely maintain, on full control of a coalition government, but are ready to settle for a mere share in power—which President Thieu rejects openly, while Mr. Nixon tries to avoid it with a proposal for elections that guarantees the survival of the present regime.

But the fact that President Thieu opposes any kind of compromise settlement is no longer of importance. As soon as Washington realizes that only a political compromise with the Communists can end the war and consequently accepts as inevitable a government with NLF representation, Thieu will have lost the power to block the way to peace, simply because his regime will collapse. The cause of its collapse will not be aggression from the North. The Thieu regime will fall because it lacks any kind of popular support—in contrast to the Communists and their allies in the South who still constitute, as they have done ever since 1945, a powerful and indestructible indigenous force.

Peace to Vietnam, and an end to the troubles that the Vietnamese war has caused to the United States, will come about only if and when the Nixon administration or its successor realizes this historical fact—stops all acts of war against the Vietcong and North Vietnam, drops support of the present Saigon regime in favor of one willing to permit all political forces in the South to participate in free elections, and then willingly accepts the choice of the people, even if the final outcome should be what it was in 1945 and 1954—the prospect of a pro-Communist regime for the whole of Vietnam. □

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[131] Even the *New York Times*, at first unduly impressed by Mr. Nixon's maneuver, admitted, in an editorial on February 8, 1972, that "the Nixon administration's acquiescence last year in the rigged single-state election destroyed the credibility of the American suggestion that elections are the route to a political settlement."

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they analyze, Rossi argues convincingly that authors who wish to discredit Mill's socialist ideas attribute them to his wife, while socialists wishing to emphasize his later, socialist period, disclaim her influence. She uses a similar principle to dissect the assessment of Harriet Taylor made by the Mills' contemporaries.

One may wonder about the basis of Rossi's attribution of "Enfranchisement of Women" to Harriet Taylor Mill. She explains it is based upon "an internal analysis of this essay, a comparison with the earlier 1832 essays, and Mill's later famous one in 1869," and she also draws upon the Mills' correspondence. Such attributions are notoriously tricky, and the analysis of hand-written draft materials would certainly be more reliable. Unfortunately, such materials are not available, and Rossi's argument appears quite plausible and well-reasoned. Despite these ticklish issues, the introductory essay should be particularly worthwhile reading for those unfamiliar with the Mills' work on sex equality, as well as for those in the women's movement. □

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Anti-Zionism

Editor:

As a new reader of DISSENT I am interested in the inclusion of Walter Laqueur's article (December 1971), "Zionism, the Marxist Critique, and the Left" in a journal "devoted to radical ideas and the values of socialism and democracy." Today Zionism is clearly not a radical, socialistic, or democratic force.

Mr. Laqueur repeatedly supports the Zionists' position toward maintaining the status quo, especially nonradical on the subject of nationalism. He rejects any radical demand: "as unreasonable [the demand] that the Jews should subordinate their national aspirations to the higher interest of the future ideal world state. . . ." Israel is chiefly financed by the money and influence of American and other Diaspora Jewish capitalists, and according to recent studies (i.e., Erik Cohen's, "A Comparative Study of the Political Institutions of the Collective Settlements," Dan Katz's, "The Kibbutz—An Open System") even its most purely socialistic sector, the kibbutz, is moving toward increased materialism. David Spitz, in the same issue states, ". . . what is decisive in democratic politics (because in conformity with the equalitarian principle) is its quantity." Zionist Israel has been implicitly or explicitly legally denying the majority of its non-Jewish residents political power, particularly those people within its "occupied territories." This policy places a synagogue-state union above a democratic priority. Israel is a democracy for only part of its inhabitants: its Jews and an established minority quota of non-Jews. Those non-Jews outside the quota are denied citizenship which the United Nations has called the right of all human beings.

I make these remarks as one not associated with either a Marxist or New Left camp. I thus am free from the generalizations against these groups pervading Mr. Laqueur's article.

I am a young Jewish woman who knows the difficulty of being an optimist in a world where many liberal intellectuals such as Mr. Laqueur embrace the comfort of "reasonableness" because alternatives to established ways are not "very promising." Before he became worn with compromises did Mr. Laqueur hope that Zionism would allow Israel to be more than simply another small nation playing the usual political games? Didn't he feel, as I do, that Israel had the potential not to be "Like All the Nations" (a book title by Magnes)? If I read Mr. Laqueur correctly I must accept the fact that Israel is a delayed Jewish reaction to history, to old concepts of nationalism.

What of those of us who would want more for Israel; want Israel to explore new models of socialism, be a leader in democratic techniques and a true leader in setting up new forms of political behavior? When realizing the strength of the people of Israel, who have overcome memories of concentration camps, language barriers, malaria-marshes to build a home, one within reason could hope that this unique energy could produce a unique nation. To insure a socialist, democratic Israeli experience concerned people must help Israel free itself from Zionist rhetoric which has so far permitted a program of non-justice for many Israeli residents, non-peace for all its people. □

PAULA RAYMAN

Dreadnought: Post-Engels?

Editor:

In your October 1971 issue Erazin Kohák attributed to Engels a declaration on military technology in which the development of the dreadnought was mentioned. Mr. Kohák stated [in "Russia: The Fire Next Time?"] that this declaration was made in the 1870s.

Since, in fact, the eponym—HMS *Dreadnought*—was launched in 1906, 11 years after the death of Engels, one wonders if Mr. Kohák's attribution might be supported by a particular citation.

DONALD E. MUDD

ERAZIM KOHÁK *replies:*

Mr. Mudd is as right as I am wrong: I shall place one wilted dandelion on Adm. Jackie Fischer's grave as apology. Since the only salt water in Czechoslovakia comes in bottles from Slovak mineral springs, I use dreadnought as a synonym for the modern battleship rather than in the correct sense of a class of heavily gunned, lightly armored, fast vessels like HMS *Dreadnought*. Engels knew better: he spoke of modern naval technology which makes the engineer who controls the machine more important than the captain. The passage I had in mind is in *Anti-Dühring*, p. 230 ff in the Moscow Foreign Languages Publishing House edition of 1954. □

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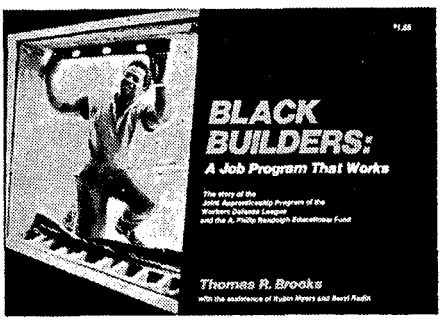

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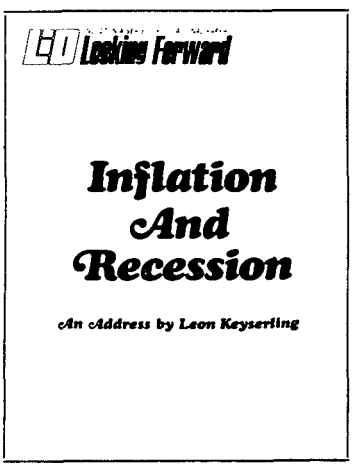

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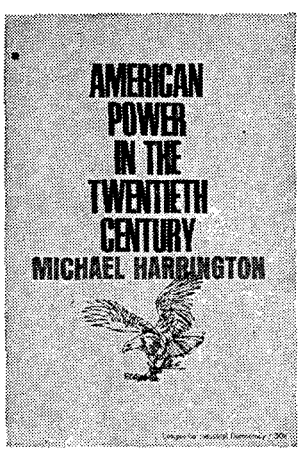

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